

#SS

FRONT: HATING GEORGE BUSH • 4 - 7 / MUSIC: LOVING THE GEORGE BUSHES • 49

EDMONTON'S 100% INDEPENDENT NEWS & ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

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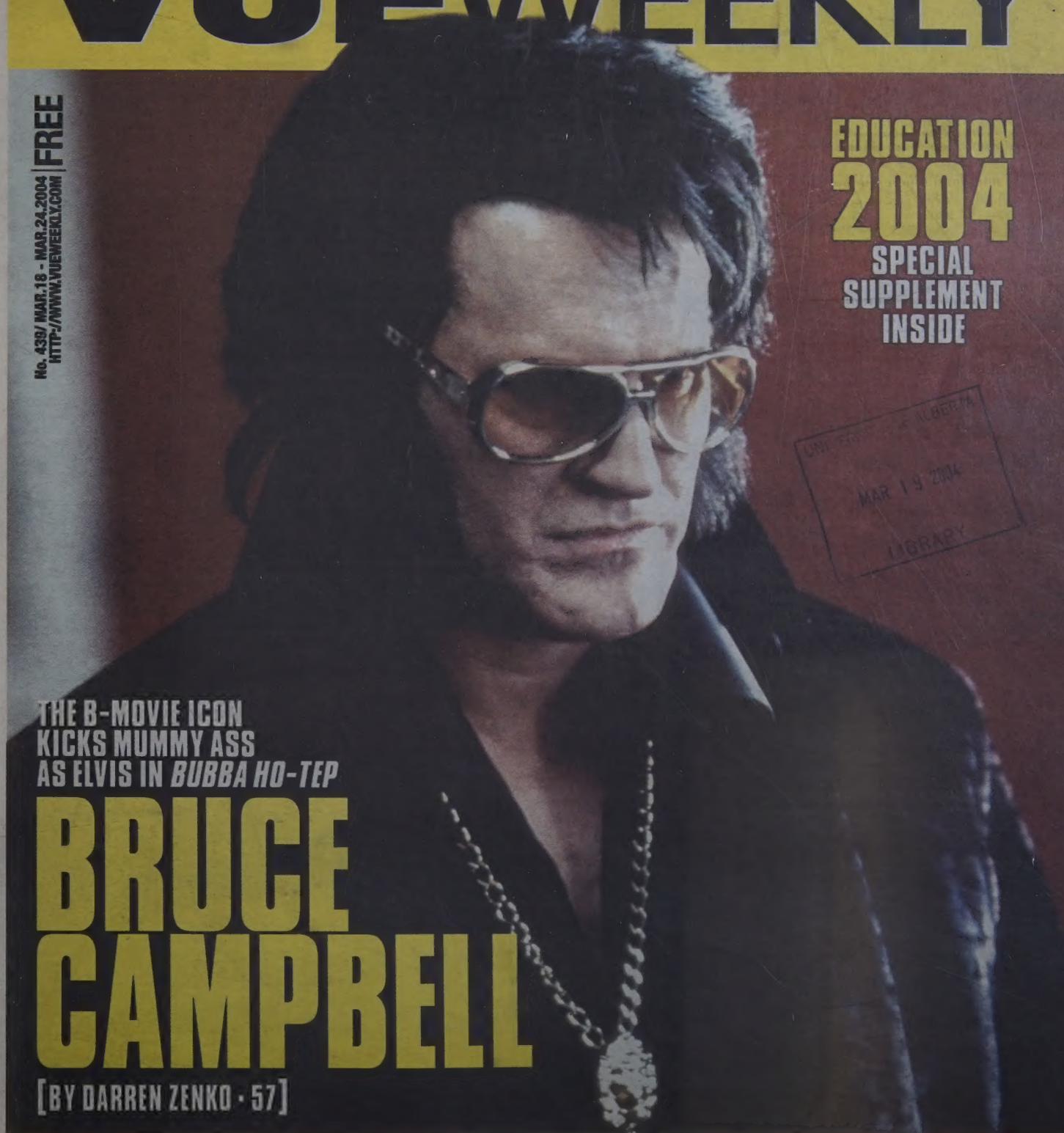
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THE B-MOVIE ICON
KICKS MUMMY ASS
AS ELVIS IN *BUBBA HO-TEP*

BRUCE CAMPBELL

[BY DARREN ZENKO • 57]





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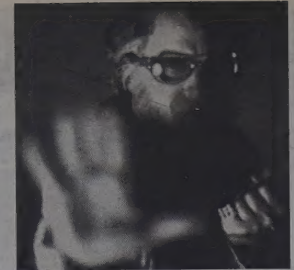
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ON THE COVER

Few actors are more beloved among sci-fi, horror and action geeks than Bruce Campbell, who's used his lantern-jawed good looks and goofball sense of humour to combat everything from zombies to Xena. In his new film, *Bubba Ho-Tep*, not only does Campbell get to play Elvis Presley and fight an evil mummy, but he also just might give the best performance of his career • 57



FRONT

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yourVUE

On the rag

Regarding Chris Boutet's VuePoint column "Shiny Herpes People" (February 26-March 3): Chris, I feel your pain. Regarding the unnamed publication and its dubious reportage, I'd like to offer my opinion that the daily in question goes well beyond the word "shitty" and in fact manages somehow to continually deteriorate. I would be pleased to see it disappear entirely.

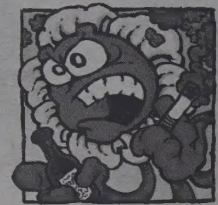
It is a newspaper which is about 35 per cent garish used car ads (and that's likely a more accurate statistic than they might acknowledge). Its articles are unremarkable at the best of times, the kind of tired, clunky reportage that must be a product of either scant pay or cursory hiring methods. I mean, not to belittle the actual Edmontonians who write for that paper, but the sum of their work is one very lame anthology. Oh, and its comics all suck.

I suppose its only redeeming qualities are: its smaller format (as opposed to its main competitor's tall, multisection format) is more manageable, particularly on the bus or in a café; and, of course, its photos of hot chicks and dudes. (Whoop-de-do.) That's it.

Its worst features are many, but its absolute nastiest characteristic is the Letters to the Editor section, specifically those bolded, parenthetical, utterly pointless responses from the editor. (To each his own.) This, to me, encapsulates the core problems with the whole publication. It's the output of a sort of ambivalence factory. It's hackneyed and soulless. And it's a reflection of one face of this city to which I will never reconcile myself. —GREG DEJONG, EDMONTON

Can't flowers and bugs live peacefully together?

It's certainly nice for you to have the opportunity to publish Bob the Angry



Flower (don't censor him, or he might have to jump ship to um... where can he go next? The Examiner? The Riverdalian? The Yellowbird Tweeter?), but don't drop Tom the

Dancing Bug. Tom is more culturally significant and usually funnier. Let Bob and Tom co-exist. If you want to drop a comic, maybe look towards the back of the paper and re-evaluate Hey, Eddie! —TYLER BINDON, EDMONTON

Vue Weekly welcomes reader response, both positive and negative. Send your opinion by mail (Vue Weekly, 10303-108 Street, Edmonton, AB, T5J 1L7), by fax ((780) 426-2889) or by e-mail (letters@vue.ab.ca). Preference is given to feedback about articles in Vue Weekly; we reserve the right to edit letters for length and clarity. Please include a daytime telephone number.

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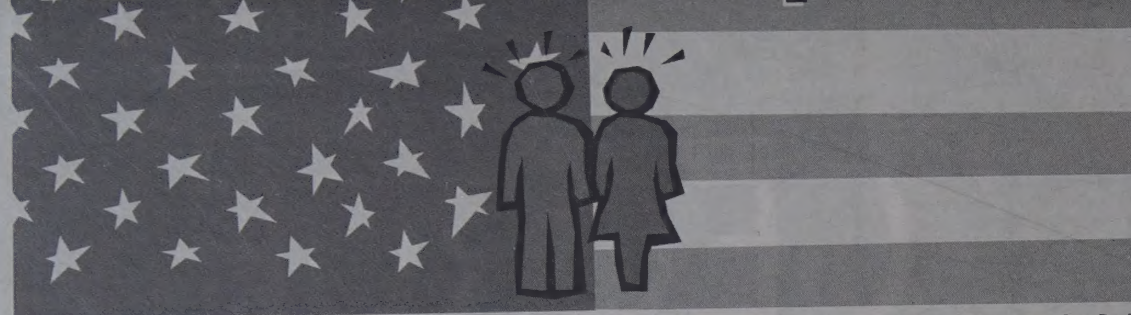
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Anti-American splendor



Sean Rivlin

All it took to make me hate the U.S.A. was a few years of actually living there

By KEN ROBINSON

I was weaned on American television and Stephen King novels. I dreamt of moving to Hollywood and going to film school. My wife was raised in a patriotic Canadian household; her anti-American sentiments were furthered through high-school debates and meetings of Peace and Justice and Amnesty International clubs. In 1999, we were living in Cambridge,

England, where she was completing her Ph.D. and applying for academic positions posted by the Modern Languages Association. She was offered a job, but it was in Auburn, Alabama.

I prepared for our move by immediately reading *Gone With the Wind*, and Margaret Mitchell convinced me that the Civil War could've been

movement instead of cesspools. On a map of Auburn, we saw that train tracks ran through the centre of town and, thinking of the inter-city we'd recently ridden to Liverpool, we envisioned ourselves sipping mint juleps and travelling in air-conditioned luxury to Birmingham.

On the Greyhound from Atlanta International, we sang, "Georgia's Got a Moon" and "When That Mid-

night Choo-Choo Leaves for Alabama." The first station at which we stopped faced a taxidermists', and we joked that our luggage had been stored next to deer carcasses. We were let off at a gas station at Auburn's major crossroads. That's when we learned there were no taxis. It's also when we saw the train for the first time. The signals flashed, the guardrails dropped and, to our dismay, several drivers ignored the barriers. It wasn't a passenger train but a freight, ironically carrying shiny new automobiles.

THERE WERE PAVEMENTS, but they were so few and far between that we decided *Where the Sidewalk Ends* must've been written about this place. There was no shade, it was humid and dogs barked at us from every yard. The solitary bus, we discovered, ran hourly and was usually 50 minutes late. The bus stops weren't marked, but a man stood by the side of the road, looking expectant, so we joined him. To be conversational, we ventured that there should be more buses. "So," he said, "like Reagan, you'd supply things where there was no demand." I restrained my wife, who I knew would resent being called a Reaganite.

The bus was small with no bell to ring. As your stop approached, you shouted, "Gettin' off!" and, if the driver wasn't too emotionally caught up in Dr. Laura's call-in radio show, you got off. On foot once more, we were treated with such disdain by passing motorists that we began to wonder whether pedestrians weren't still associated in Southerners' minds with Rosa Parks and the Montgomery bus boycott.

We found some shade beneath a tree in a park. I sat facing a sign reading "No Firearms Allowed"; my wife faced a man reading a newspaper whose headlines screamed "Man

Moving Gun from One Pocket to Another Accidentally Shoots Friend in Other Car," "Girl Taking Gun From Glove Compartment Shoots Driver in Leg," and "Live Bullets, Not Blanks, Blamed for Haunted Hayride Tragedy. Shooter Defended as Good Christian." "What's their definition of a 'bad' Christian," my wife half-joked, half-pondered. "Is there such a thing?" She sounded tired, I thought.

Someone had been stabbed to death some nights before at the apartment complex where we'd arranged to live, so, in addition to the lease, we signed an addendum which implied that if we were killed, it was our problem. But the rent was inexpensive and the apartment huge. "Yes, by all accounts," the manager explained, "the cost of living here's cheap."

"Life is cheap here," my wife observed. The manager wasn't offended. He knew she was a professor and assumed she'd corrected his grammar. "Yes, we need people to come here and teach us good English," he said.

Okay, we told ourselves, it was a mistake to come here; if we can only continue to laugh at our misfortune—arming ourselves against that culture shock which, by all rights, we should've expected, having moved here from East Anglia—we'll be right.

OUR VISAS DIDN'T ALLOW me to work, but I was looking forward to writing and submitting stories to science fiction magazines; for the first time, my enclosed, self-addressed stamped envelope would feature an American address and I'd be using American postage, not International Reply Coupons. Sadly, editors hated my stories about werewolves on the moon and people holding their eyes open while sneezing as a method of interdimensional travel because they "failed to fully embrace American culture." "You need to market these in Europe," I was told, "where they might be a hit."

My wife was similarly frustrated; fraternities and sororities ruled the campus. On Halloween, a "traditionally white" fraternity dressed like members of the "traditionally black" fraternity or like members of the Ku Klux Klan, complete with shotguns and nooses, then posted pictures of themselves on the Internet. Students

SEE PAGE 6



POLITICS

Libs won't lock lips with Bloc

MONTREAL—Even though the federal Liberals know they're staring down the barrel of a possible minority government after the next election, they nonetheless sent a strong message to Quebec voters this week by rejecting offers from the Bloc Québécois to join forces and create a coalition government.

Thanks to the ongoing \$250-million sponsorship scandal, the Liberals, who were at one point were practically assured majority rule in Parliament, have been plummeting in the public opinion polls lately. A recent Ipsos-Reid poll shows Liberal support at 38 per cent nationally compared to 26 per cent for the Conservatives, a tight squeeze by any standards. But the real backbreaker for the Liberals may turn out to be Quebec, where the Bloc is kicking Liberal support around the, uh, block, with an commanding lead of 49 per cent against 31 per cent. If the polls prove accurate, the Libs stand to lose more than half their seats in Quebec, which could prove disastrous for the party.

As a result, the Bloc proposed this week that the Liberals' only hope for majority rule may be a coalition government with the BQ. The Liberals, however, disagreed, calling the Bloc proposal "offensive" to all Canadians.

"The prime minister has made it clear that we would not form a coalition government with the Bloc, because their vision of Canada is fundamentally and diametrically opposed to our vision of Canada," Scott Brison, a former Conservative MP who joined the Liberals in December, said in an interview with the Canadian Press. "That's where the Alliance have demonstrated extraordinary lack of judgment and misunderstanding of the Quebec question. The raison d'être for the BQ is to tear apart the country. It would be sulphuric for most Canadians to see a coalition government formed with the Bloc. To elevate the Bloc Québécois, a separatist party, to determine public policy for all of Canada... would be offensive to Canadians."

The Bloc, however, fails to see how stronger representation of Quebec interests could be such a bad thing. BQ leader Gilles Duceppe has stated that while his party will not seek a formal coalition with any other party than the Liberals, he is willing to work with any party on a case-by-case basis to boost Quebec's visibility in Parliament—a move that would certainly spell doom for the Liberals. "We'll support what is good for Quebec and we'll be against what is not good for Quebec," Duceppe told the CP.

Meanwhile, BQ spokesperson Philippe Gagnon dismissed the Liberals' hollerings about the offensiveness of the Bloc as a hollow attempt to vilify Quebec and draw attention away from the scandals threatening to destroy the

Liberal party. "They are in [trouble] up to their chins and they see this issue as a political lifeline to try to deflect attention from the sponsorship scandal," said Gagnon. "Mr. Martin is trying to speculate his way out of a bad situation." —CHRIS BOUTET

BUSINESS

Shady Acres

WASHINGTON—Once again finding itself at the centre of a corruption inquiry, a prominent Canadian engineering company could find itself the first major international firm ever blacklisted by the World Bank.

The World Bank formally reopened a corruption inquiry against Ontario-based Acres International this week, according to a report in the *Guardian*. Acres was originally exonerated from any wrongdoing, but recent developments have caused the World Bank to re-examine charges of bribery against the company and several others involved in an extensive dam-building project in the African country of Lesotho. This time around, Acres was found guilty of bribing Masupha Sole, chief executive of the multibillion-dollar Lesotho Highlands Water Project, a massive series of dams providing water to South Africa and electricity for the tiny, landlocked country, in return for favourable construction contracts. Acres maintains that they were unaware their money was going directly into Sole's personal bank accounts, but Sole, who is now serving 15 years in prison, states that the arrangement was clear.

Acres has attempted to appeal the charges in the past, but to no avail. In his appeal judgment, Judge Jan Steyn said the company "will live in the shadow of the taint of corruption," and predicted that "an embargo by the World Bank and other institutions such as donor agencies is no remote possibility."

In other words, sell your stock. —CHRIS BOUTET

INTERNET

Pay it again, spam

NEW YORK—Thanks to a new American law, Internet users across the globe may see a reduction in the amount of annoying junk mail cluttering their electronic inboxes.

Last week, Microsoft, America Online, Yahoo! and EarthLink, four of America's largest Internet service providers, filed lawsuits aimed at more than 100 bulk spam e-mailers who use dummy e-mail addresses that are difficult for the average user to block. The suits, filed in four separate states, are all based on a law passed in Washington last year that came into effect on January 1. The law bans e-mailers from sending ads using misleading subject lines (such as the infamous "Re:" or "Urgent: Reply required") or false return addresses.

According to *The Economist*, 62 per cent of all e-mail received around the world is junk mail. And most of it comes from the United States. So if America cracks down on its own users, it could help people worldwide.

Canadian Internet users have long been bombarded by offers from American firms, and in many cases even legitimate offers are useless because they can only be redeemed by American residents.

Because some of America's worst spammers are so adept at protecting their real identities, most of the 100-plus lawsuits initiated by Microsoft and company name "John Doe" as a defendant. But even the new American laws can't keep spammers from remaining one step ahead of their pursuers. New software packages that can make spammers compliant with the new legislation with the touch of a button are already available.

While a group of companies are behind the lawsuits, it's the Microsoft name that jumps off the page. The suits are part of the company's new aggressive and controversial anti-spam strategy, which also could bring an end to "free" e-mail as we know it.

At the outset of 2004, Microsoft

chairman Bill Gates made a public pledge to help rid the world of junk e-mail by the year 2006, never mind the fact that this legal crusade/PR campaign is keeping the company's name in the headlines across the planet.

In an effort to stop the increasing amounts of spam that clog our inboxes, Gates officially unveiled a new company policy earlier this month which encourages a system under which electronic "stamps" are purchased so users can send e-mail. Gates floated the idea earlier in the year at the World Economic Forum. Microsoft's plan would impose a nominal fee upon every e-mail sent, maybe a penny.

Gates feels this policy would not punish the average user, but it would cripple spammers who want to send a million e-mails per day. If the plan to charge for e-mails doesn't work, Microsoft also supports a system in which a user would need to solve a simple skill-testing question or puzzle in exchange for the right to send a single e-mail. For regular users would have to put in an extra few seconds of work to send an e-mail, while bulk spammers would face a massive headache having to solve thousands upon thousands of these puzzles.

The Gates proposal, however, does not take into consideration the fact that computer users already pay for their e-mail privileges by paying for Internet accounts and e-mail addresses. E-mail is not free, as Gates asserts, because users do pay.

Moreover, Gates's comments have drawn the ire of the European Union. Over the weekend, Lucio Stanca, Italy's minister of technology, issued a new EU policy statement supporting a stance under which no one government or company should be allowed to regulate the Internet, which would be the case if the American-headquartered Microsoft were to become the postmaster of cyberspace.

"One of the most important reasons for the Internet's success," Stanca told Reuters, "is that no single entity controls it." —STEVEN SANDOR



By DAN RUBINSTEIN

Tribute to Tooker

There were musicians, politicians, artists, students, reporters, relatives, conscientious citizens and curious passersby. There was at least one teen in a Slayer ballcap, at least one rambunctious child, too many gray ponytails to count and a guy wearing a T-shirt with an image of a necktie on the front and the phrase "Tooker Gomborg suits me fine!" written on the back.

It's a cliché, yet it's true—the public memorial service held for Edmonton's most unique former city councillor in the atrium of City Hall on Tuesday felt like a real community gathering. Though there were tears, both at the microphone and amongst the couple hundred people who came to remember Gomborg, there was also laughter. Again, a cliché. Again, true.

Tooker's kid brother Avi, with those familiar defiant tufts of hair, talked about how Tooker once attempted, ambitiously yet unsuccessfully, to hitch a ride to Jasper on a private plane. MLA Brian Mason, who served on council beside Tooker for three years, described how Tooker walked the talk by wearing natural fibres, eschewing meat and cycling everywhere. "But sometimes he went a bit too far," Mason continued, sharing an anecdote about Tooker's natural rubber shoes leaving black scuff marks on the floor of a public racquetball court, forcing the two men to spend nearly an hour on their hands and knees scrubbing away the evidence.

Patricia Hartnagel told us about the peace camp Tooker established in front of Canada Place to protest the Gulf War in January 1991 and our collective responsibility to continue his work, cautioning that the struggle will take generations and that we're mere dots on the landscape. "It's tough being an activist," she said, "and I can only imagine what it was like for someone like Tooker."

Hartnagel was referring to the depression that prompted Tooker to take his own life in Halifax on March 5. But beyond his impact as an environmentalist and social justice activist, he was Angela Bischoff's husband. After a lengthy silence and a deep sigh, Bischoff spoke of the first time she saw her soulmate—she was the keener in the front row, he was the workshop leader who made the science of bicycle repair seem appealing. She talked about how Tooker's 30 years of commitment to self-education and to a just and sustainable world led him to see connections. And then she rang the bicycle bell they rang when they married, asking us to think about Tooker whenever we hear that sound.

It will be impossible not to. ●

Flag-waving

Continued from page 4

wrote research essays that concluded, "The best part was when two girls danced topless on the hood of a car, and the guys tried to touch them, but they pushed them away." Her teaching evaluations read, "It is unacceptable for an instructor to have a pierced nose" and "She pushes feminism. Not everyone believes in it."

Luckily, we ultimately made friends with people as miserable as we were. Together, we went to the Alabama National Fair to eat deep-fried turkey legs and see the racing and diving pigs. When my wife and I were embarrassed for the teenaged boy who had to vacuum all the hay off of the prize bull, our friend said, "Why? It's not like he couldn't read a book with one hand and vacuum with the other." Tragically, however, they were Americans and we were Canadians, and when a bald eagle on display moved to scratch its butt, they, like

everyone else in the crowd gasped in adoration, and my wife and I glanced at each other and knew it was hopeless: we'd never fit in.

THEN IT WAS September 12, 2001, and suddenly it wasn't safe to complain about anything to anyone anymore. Not the Chick-Fil-A opening across the street from another Chick-Fil-A so drivers wouldn't have to make left turns, because it was a sign terrorism hadn't affected the town. Not the letter from our governor saying he'd thrown out all the mail on his desk for fear of anthrax; so if we'd written, we should resend. Not the off-duty fire engine that took a corner so quickly that half its equipment flew into the intersection. (I'm still surprised Steve Martin hasn't been pressured into publicly apologizing for *Roxanne*, since it pokes fun at firefighters.) Not the anti-American sentiments my wife ran into at a conference in Japan. "Oh," she informed her students upon her return, "I made sure everyone knew I was Canadian." They folded their

arms, looked at the floor and grumbled in indignation.

"Don't judge America by Alabama! Please!" That's what we were told all the time we were there. After three years, my wife found another job—this time in Indianapolis, Indiana. To symbolize our change for the better, the afternoon we arrived we left our hotel room to see the local opera company perform *La Traviata*. Before the curtain had gone up, we were holding back fits of hysterical laughter. We were doomed: we'd go crazy. Indiana wasn't any different from Alabama—the orchestra was opening an Italian opera with "The Star Spangled Banner" and the audience jumped to their feet as if they were hearing the Hallelujah Chorus.

AFTER A WEEK of searching, we found an apartment in a complex we thought we'd like. The lease seemed promising: "Windows will only show curtains with white backing," "Pets will weigh less than 20 pounds," "No laundry or banner is to be hung on

the patio." When the manager showed us our actual apartment, we saw that our balcony faced another with a 10-foot-long American flag woven into its railing.

"That's not against the rules?" I asked, already dreading his answer.

"What? No! I mean, sure, if it were a Confederate or a Colts flag."

My wife lost it. This time, there'd be no misunderstanding. This man must know we're not simply nit-pickers. "They're the same damn thing! No damn difference! None! Symbols of mindless conformity! You people never question anything! You all do this! You all do that!"

I joined her. I'd never be able to relax sitting at that window, staring at that flag. "God and country! God and football! Your teams form circles on the field and pray! There's a church down the street and its message board reads, 'Thank you, Blue!' Baptists, thanking the Colts for an inspiring season!"

"That windstorm we had this week," my wife interjected. "We saw a tree fall and crush a sign which read, 'God bless and protect our troops.' That was an act of God, but the homeowners ignored it. The sign was replaced and the tree went into a woodchipper. As a warning, its pieces were scattered around the bases of other trees, like that severed head Marlon Brando tosses in Martin Sheen's lap in *Apocalypse Now*."

"Oh! This really bugs me. I was watching Saturday morning cartoons, and there was this commercial for Chex cereal. It was set at the UN, and they were arguing whether Chex was

good because it was sweet or because it was healthy. At the end, these two kids turn to each other and say, 'What do these guys do again?' 'I dunno.' You're raising a generation to hate the United Nations! You're always saying, 'Think outside the box.' Have you ever bothered to look inside the box? There's an SUV in there, guzzling gas and oil, justifying lousy public transportation, unploughed streets and war."

"I noticed a rock beside a driveway down the street, painted with the words, 'The U.S. will hunt down and punish those responsible...' You needed a symbol for dogged determination and you chose a rock?"

"Several houses around here have two flags and two flagpoles! Help me, I'm confused. Which one's the American embassy of Suburban Indy? And small flags fly from the passenger's side windows of all the cars. Some of the drivers, I notice, affix them to either side of their hoods like they were chauffeuring around the president himself, like Clint Eastwood should be running alongside them."

"I'm telling you, freedom is like sex; if you talk about it all the time, it's because you're not getting any!"

All this time, the manager had been testing the garbage disposal.

The following morning, there were three more flags on the balconies facing ours. Our neighbours stood united against us. After a roundabout journey, we'd arrived. We were officially anti-Americans. ☹

Ken Robinson and his wife Tristanne will be moving back to Canada this summer.

BOB THE ANGRY (Howser.com) FLOWER



D O G K I L L E R



Haiku Horoscope

ARIES

(Mar 21-Apr 19)
Don't believe the hype
Catching SARS is not all that
It's cracked up to be

LIBRA

(Sept 23-Oct 22)
That ringing piece of
Plastic in your pocket will
Make you its new bitch

TAURUS

(Apr 20-May 20)
Your fear of clowns is
Childish; move on to a fear
Of comedians

SCORPIO

(Oct 23-Nov 21)
Brain cancer is a
Small price to pay for constant
"Beck-and-Call" status

GEMINI

(May 21-June 20)
Shock and awe tactics
May work during war but they
Won't work for dating

SAGITTARIUS

(Nov 22-Dec 21)
Mixing food with sex
Is all fun and games until
You lose the hot dogs

CANCER

(June 21-July 22)
You can't buy love but
You can rent my services
For a buck an hour

CAPRICORN

(Dec 22-Jan 19)
It is okay to
Admit you need help if you
Burn the evidence

LEO

(July 23-Aug 22)
It's not perverted
To keep a stiff upper lip
Stop getting turned on

AQUARIUS

(Jan 20-Feb 18)
Tutankhamen has
A hell of a lot of gold
It's too bad he's dead

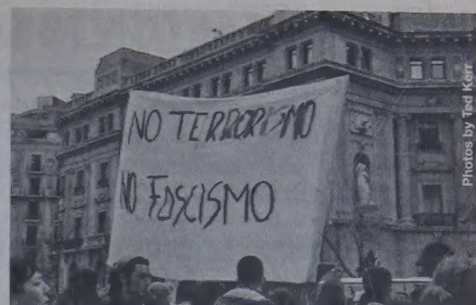
VIRGO

(Aug 23-Sept 22)
You will travel to
The future only to find
That the brochure lied

PISCES

(Feb 19-Mar 20)
It's time you admit
That you have real problems with
Drinking and Martians

by Jonathan Ball, Registered Fraud, www.jonathanball.com



Photos by Ted Kerr

Spanish cry

An Edmontonian gets caught up in the emotions of a turbulent week

By TED KERR

BARCELONA—In a city where Gaudí's homage to the holy family stretches unfinished to the sky, where there are more original Picassos than Starbucks outlets and you can buy a live rooster on Las Ramblas, no detail should be ignored. In Barcelona, the day after last week's rush-hour bomb attacks in Madrid, everywhere you looked there were black ribbons and Spanish flags, white handprints and confused faces. The response to the terror seemed 2D, not fleshed-out. I saw the newscasters on TV with their serious faces large against the small corner screen of tragedy; I saw newspaper covers of blood and wreckage. But that is not what was wrecking through the streets. On the streets I saw disillusionment that seemed more real than the mourning.

There was a movement growing against the government, who people felt should take responsibility for the tragedy. The citizens of Spain spoke and in the Sunday, March 14 elections the ruling Popular Party lost to the Socialist Party. Whether the bombers were ETA or al-Qaeda, it did not matter to voters. They blamed outgoing prime minister Jose Maria Aznar's Bush-allied PP administration for going into Iraq and courting the privilege of being part of the New World Order. The people on the streets were not there just to demonstrate against terror; they were also trying to work through the pitfalls of modern democracy.

Twice in one day I found myself part of the growing pains. People filled and lined the streets in sympathy and in protest. Passion is not straightforward. Anger is hard to pin down. The numbers for both gatherings were overwhelming.

I WAS IN A METRO STATION at noon the day after the attacks. All train activity was suspended for 15 minutes as the city paused for reflection and a silent tribute to the victims. By the time the train started, I found myself in a car with teenagers who had homemade banners and painted faces; they were making their way to the Plaza de Catalunya. With the protests underway, we joined the flow and I wove between participant and observer. My Spanish is so bad that at one

point I thought I was chanting for the "assassination of the point."

I've been to an Edmonton peace march against the war in Iraq and I've participated in a May Day riot in London, but this experience was different. Neither time before was there such happiness and joy radiating from the people. They were mainly teenagers and international nomads, marching down the Via Laietana clapping, cheering and doing the wave (not just for arenas anymore) as office workers poured out of their second- and third-

story windows to show their support. Hotel workers, store clerks, cooks

and waiters watched from where they worked. People in trapped cars honked in acceptance and encouragement. Everyone appeared to be smiling. What they were committed to was what we were experiencing: peace and camaraderie. We wanted something good to come out of tragedy.

That was the day.

Night. I was on my way to Starbucks (no, really) as I joined a loose group of clappers with "NO GUERRA" signs going down Las Ramblas. I assumed it was a collection of people of different languages who wanted to show their support and that they were clapping in lieu of any international slogan. (Ricky Martin songs don't count.) By the time we found ourselves where I had joined the first time, we were a small group in the middle of something big, something electrifying, something already beginning to fall apart. There were too many people with no direction, no leader and too many causes. As simple and clear as the afternoon had been, with night there came confusion.

A RUMOUR that there were some politicians in cars trapped by the crowds instigated a surge towards their location, and soon from every direction we saw the navy and red uniforms of the national police. With brilliant choreography, the police mastered a show of crowd dispersal more riveting than an MTV awards performance. With grace, skill and a sense of urgency, they ran in different directions bringing with them streams of people that had once made up the sea of crowd. Each follower thought they knew where the action was going; each was wrong. The march was over for all intents and purposes and, within a half an

hour, it was hard to tell who was shopping and who was protesting.

The marching for the day was over, but in the plazas people were beginning to gather. Hundreds of people huddled around shrines of

photos and candles, flowers and teddy bears. There were pockets of silence and outbursts of noise. It is a stereotype I have no problem maintaining that the Spanish are passionate.

The passion was palatable that day as it turned from sadness to anger to frustration to reflection. The demonstrations that took place were for the most part not against anything, but in truth for peace. ☺

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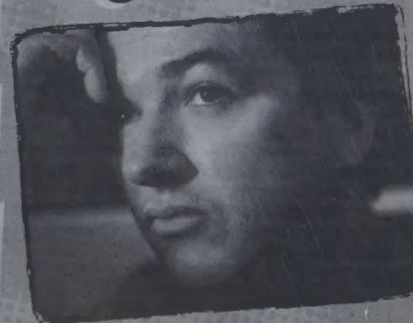
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The Butt of the jokes

Corner Gas star
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to town with a full
tank of low-key
humour

By JAMES ELFORD

If food humour has a way of sneaking into Brent Butt's stand-up routine, it's because it's one of the things that he knows best. "I talk a lot about food," says the pudgy comedian. "It's the bane of my existence, but I love it. I'd be fine if I never had another piece of cake, but tell me I can't have any more cheese and I'd just lay down on the train tracks."

Another thing the comedian knows well is small-town Saskatchewan—Butt grew up in the farming town of Tisdale, an experience that gave him the idea for his well-received sitcom *Corner Gas*. Airing on CTV—and, thanks to a timeslot change, no longer against *Survivor*—*Corner Gas* is sort of a "what if I had stayed in Tisdale" for Butt. He plays Brent LeRoy (pronounced "Lee-roy"), the owner of a gas station in the tiny town of Dog River, who genially observes his collection of friends, family and visitors as they go about their everyday lives. The show adheres to the no-plot *Seinfeldian* school of sitcoms (as opposed to the too-much-plot, *Blackfly* school most Canadian sitcoms have graduated from), and it's funny and surprisingly authentic. "We wanted to make it

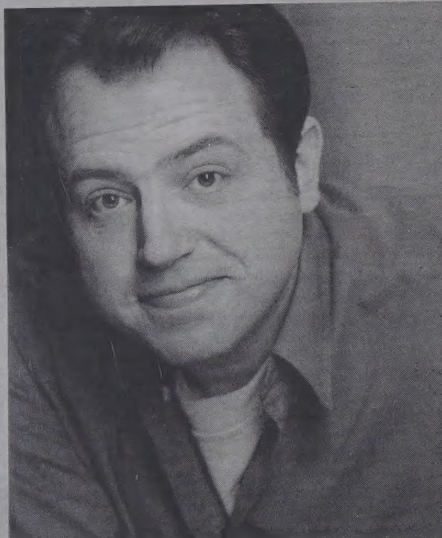
seem as natural as possible," says Butt, who insisted on filming it on location in Saskatchewan without a laughtrack. "We didn't want it to seem too much like a TV show. I mean, you have two guys in a field, you hit a joke and hear laughter.... Where is the laughter coming from?"

Another pitfall they wanted to avoid was the kind of forced patriot-

ism at the same jokes. Butt recalls showing the same episode to a 21-year-old "street tough" and a 50-year-old university professor: "I had to stop the tape twice because they were laughing so hard," he says, "but it was at two different things. That showed me that the show was layered and for everyone."

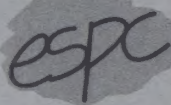
THE SHOW DRAWS UPON the same easygoing, conversational style of humour that Butt uses in his standup, full of observations culled from the hours he's spent chatting with folks at Tisdale's main meeting place—the local coffee shop. "It's not really set up-punchline-tag kind of jokes," he says. "It's more about finding ways to be funny within the context of the conversation you're having or finding funny ways to say things. You really think about the phrasing, and maybe rewrite it six or seven times. Even then you realize it's not quite right and you have to keep on tweaking the wording."

For a guy whose name is Butt and who stars in a show called *Corner Gas*, there's not a lot of fart and dick jokes or grossout gags in his routine. "For the most part, I find that subject matter pretty broadly covered," he says, "and I'd rather try and talk about stuff that isn't talked about. That isn't to say I don't enjoy filthy humour, but for me, I think comedians should try and stay as true to themselves as they can and I find I generally don't think that filthy. Whatever your natural true state is, that's where you should write from." ♦



BRENT BUTT

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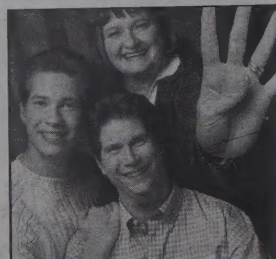
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By RICHARD BURNETT

Till death do us part

I was quietly riding the train to Quebec City on my way to a big-ass party at North America's only Ice Hotel when I read a godawful column by the recently married Joshua Ostroff in the *Globe and Mail*. "A few weekends ago I hit an after-hours dance club to get down to some apocalyptic techno and the place was rammed with late-twentysomethings," he sneered as if anyone gay or straight past the quarter-century mark had better get on with the business of life.

And Ostroff's only 28—he made my party train to Quebec City look like the *Antiques Roadshow*.

But that's not all I've read that's got me riled up. After the *Dear-Mary.com* website demanded that U.S. vice-president Dick Cheney's openly lesbian daughter Mary (who is running her dad's reelection campaign) denounce George Dubya's proposed anti-gay marriage Constitutional amendment, Cheney snorted, "One of the most unpleasant aspects of this business is the extent of which private lives are intruded upon when these kinds of issues come up. I really have always considered my daughter's life private and I think that's the way it ought to remain."

I think it's Cheney and Dubya who are intruding on our lives. As for Mary Cheney, who is in a committed lesbian relationship, she's as big a two-faced bitch as her old man.

She could learn a lesson from David Knight, the 42-year-old son of Senator William Knight, California's most prominent and vocal opponent of same-sex marriage: David Knight married his partner of 10 years, Joseph Lazzaro, in San Francisco on March 9. "I'm not here to confront my father," Knight told reporters after getting hitched. "I'm here to confront his politics."

Knight Sr., meanwhile, echoed Slick Dick. "I love my son," he said in a prepared statement, "but we continue to disagree on this issue, and because this is a personal family matter I do not wish to respond."

That statement is as shameful as the Ride Snowboards company, which at a February snow industry trade show in Montreal hung a banner that read, "The worst thing about riding a Burton is telling your friend you're gay." (Burton is a rival snowboard maker.)

Ride president Robert Marcovitch issued an apology on his company's website last week—an apology that never even mentions the word "gay."



Paul Winfield

"It has recently come to the attention of management at Ride Snowboards that a very inappropriate and insensitive statement was posted at our recent industry trade show booth," Marcovitch states. "At the outset, we must be clear that our company and its employees in no way condone or otherwise support this type of activity or message. We are very disturbed by its occurrence."

I think Marcovitch and company were more disturbed by the threat of a boycott.

And that's precisely what I plan on

doing to the Federation of Gay Games, which this month awarded the substitute 2006 Gay Games to Chicago. (Montreal was stripped of the games last November after refusing to relinquish financial control to the FGG.)

Fortunately, sound minds think alike. Equality Illinois political director Rick Garcia trashed the 2006 Chicago games in the *Chicago Tribune*. "We're not spending one dime or one ounce of our resources on this," he quipped. "The largest gay rights group in the city doesn't want it here. The city is

lukewarm at best. We don't have time to do it, it's going to be second-rate and it's going to be an embarrassment to the city." Tell that to the FGG.

The most telling story of the week, though, was the obituary of 62-year-old African-American actor Paul Winfield who died of a heart attack on March 7. He was nominated for an Oscar in 1972 for his performance as Nathan Lee Morgan, the loving sharecropper dad, in one of my all-time favourite movies, *Sounder*. Winfield's *Los Angeles Times* obit was picked up by newspapers worldwide

and is notable for what it doesn't say: "Never married, Winfield shared his Hollywood Hills home with seven pugs, each named after a Shakespearean character, and more than 600 ceramic and bronze pug figures. He is survived by a sister, Patricia Wilson of Las Vegas."

Even in death, Winfield was denied the dignity of being openly gay. But people should know that Winfield was a proudly gay man. Sadly, he was deeply unhappy since his partner Chuck Gillian passed away two years ago. Like the obit said, he was never married. ☹

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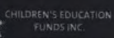


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IN THE BOX
The Elephant and Castle on Whyte's

By **DAVID YOUNG**
AND **JOHN TURNER**

Only a few weeks left for the Oilers and playoffs are still in view. In fact, as of Thursday, the Oilers were four points out of the playoffs. To get this far, the Oilers beat Colorado in OT (3-2), lost to Vancouver in OT (4-3), beat Ottawa in regulation (3-1) and beat Columbus in regulation (3-2).

John: So I'm walking to the car in the Rexall Place parking lot after the Vancouver game on Friday when I feel I big smack on the back of my shoulder—I was hit by a snowball. When I turned around there was no one to be seen. I thought that was an appropriate thing to happen at a game against the Canucks... to be hit by a cowardly Vancouver fan from behind. I'll be glad to see Vancouver's dream of winning the Stanley Cup go nowhere again this spring.

Dave: I've got to be honest with you, John. I hit you with that snowball from behind the grassy knoll beside Rexall. I guess hitting a guy named John from behind a grassy knoll would be more appropriate if Dallas were in town. You're right about the Bertuzzi thing, though. He did more to hurt his team's chances during this year's play-

offs than Dan Cloutier did in the last two series. I guess Bertuzzi will be the patsy this year.

John: Had the Oilers gotten the same number of points out of their games all season long as they have the last 10 games they would certainly be sitting in a playoff spot right now. I guess the important thing is that they're playing consistently well heading into their last nine games of the year. They earned a point in a tough game against the Avs and they outplayed Vancouver but only managed a single point, largely because of a couple of bad goals let in by Jussi Markkanen.

Laraque certainly has rewarded Kevin Lowe and Craig MacTavish for not trading him out of Edmonton.

Dave: The Vancouver game was also the seventh Oiler game in a row to hit overtime, which stands as a new NHL record. I find that odd, because NHL players are salaried employees of their teams and traditionally, salaried employees try to avoid overtime as it cuts into their pay. In fact, a recent general manager at my day job would usually only appear at work about 25-30 hours a week. Just to stretch his salary out. I'm glad the Oilers don't see it that way.

John: I thought Edmonton needed

three of four points against Vancouver and Ottawa and they accomplished that with a win against the Sens on Sunday. It was another strong game by the Oil, but the Senators helped out by refusing to shoot the puck at the net. And just when you thought Edmonton would blow it all against Columbus they showed us that maybe they're serious about making it into the playoffs after all by scoring the winning goal less than two minutes after the Blue Jackets tied it up.

Dave: And in the Columbus game we got to see another of Georges Laraque's bodyslams into the boards after scoring a goal. He got a goal against Colorado as well. One of the producers from Sportsnet I spoke to said they turn the rinkboard mics up when Georges scores a goal just to punch up the sound of 220-odd pounds hitting the glass. Laraque certainly has rewarded Kevin Lowe and

Craig MacTavish for not trading him out of Edmonton. Maybe that agreement should have been made much earlier.

John: Edmonton has a huge game against Nashville this Friday and they still have to play Los Angeles twice and St. Louis once. They're only four points out of eighth spot and if they win those games they should earn themselves a chance to compete for the Stanley Cup.

Dave: Those two teams aren't doing a lot to help the Oilers, though. They keep winning and staying just ahead of Edmonton. The only St. Louis I want to see in the playoffs is Tampa Bay's Martin St. Louis. ☺

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infinite lives

By DARREN ZENKO

Putting the "bile" in "mobile gaming"

Some time ago cartoonist Shannon Wheeler, in his strip *Too Much Coffee Man*, described the experience of absentmindedly adding milk to his coffee cup without first pouring the actual coffee. Taking a big 'ol sip, not expecting a mouthful of homo, he was treated to the raw, unfiltered experience of what milk actually tastes like, actually *is*: fatty globules in a watery suspension. It was accidental *satori*, one of those moments where, against the best efforts of our fil-

tering minds, we grasp for a moment the fundamental nature of the world.

I was reminded of Wheeler's anecdote the other day as I had a similar, though not identical (!) always forget to buy milk, so I drink my coffee black. By the way, buy your beans at the Italian supermarket; everywhere else is a total ripoff) experience while reading a news item about parents who were shocked and appalled when their little darling caught a glimpse of the porno movie (*Chocolate Cream*, if I

and jurisprudence to deal with the issue of watching television while driving.

Okay, maybe it's not such a big deal, but it really messed me up for a couple minutes, maybe because I'd already been thinking about this incredible push to entertain ourselves at all times in the context of mobile gaming. This is, apparently, the Next Frontier of gaming, but... Ah, hell. I'm not a Luddite—I'm not! I love gadgets and gizmos *dearly*. All seven Game Boys I've owned have been trea-

Finding Nemo's not playing on the DVD) around the world. Bleep bloop.

Huh. Maybe I *am* a Luddite of some kind, you know? 'Cause it just occurred to me that as much as the constant gaming and TV-watching bugs me (it saddens me that kids on long driving vacations are soaking up *Spongebob* and beating *Ratchet* and *Clank* rather than discovering, say, *Lloyd Alexander*), I'm even more bugged by the online connectivity. I hate online connectivity. I

the day, I used to play a lot of online text-based games—and these days I use my Cube's Game Boy Player in the comfort of my own home more than I use my actual Game Boy. I like to walk down alleys and see things. I like to take the bus and look at people. I like to listen to tapes when I'm driving (well, riding; I don't actually drive) and I like to be able to physically bodycheck my opponents when I'm playing any one of the 16 million kart-racing games available.

Above all, I like to play by myself. I like my videogame me-time, and I like it in my own home, in the awesome chair picked out expressly for its incredibly gaming-friendly design. I wouldn't care to share my adventures in, say, *Morrowind*, or sit head-over-fists and play it in public. I guess I just think it's somehow *rude*—as rude as forcing other drivers to watch your movies or forcing pedestrians to hear your retarded bass-thumpin' sound system. Call me old-fashioned, but when we're out in public we have some duty to at least *pretend* we're part of society, of the world, rather than a self-contained mobile entertainment receptor. ●

I hate playing videogames with strangers, because they're mostly assholes.

recall correctly) some Motorin' wanderer was screening on his Audi's onboard DVD system. As the article rolled on, through other anecdotes and the "There oughtta be a law"/"There is a law" stuff, the words began to blur. I became light-headed, even dizzy. I had to sit down.... Well, I was already sitting down, I guess, but I was extra happy about it. All my mind could do was spin the same datum:

We—you and I, all of us—live in a society that needs a body of legislation

sured possessions. But since when do we need something like, for example, what's just been announced for Nokia's inverse-Pegasus (heart of a bird, wings of a horse) game-phone hybrid n-Gage system: the world's first wireless-based massively-multiplayer online roleplaying game. Everywhere, all the time, no excuses... you are a Barbarian Lord, Barbarian-Lording it up with thousands of other Barbarian Lords in bus terminals and doctors offices and movie lines and SUV backseats (as long as

hate playing videogames with strangers, because they're mostly *assholes*. Hyper-aggressive, intolerant, snippy, snooty, racist, sexist, homophobic, illiterate cheaters chanting constantly to their chthonic cyber-deity, Origlol. I like multiplayer gaming, but I like playing with friends and *against* friends—a "fuck you, fag!" from a buddy, I can handle.

I'm old, yeah. I'm a throwback. I hate online gaming and mobile text messaging—although ironically, back in



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The smell of sea-dwelling lifeforms fills the air, and the East Coast music in the background makes me feel as though I've been suddenly transported to the Rock. I'm searching for the words to describe the dining area, a compact section featuring artistic depictions of fish and unsurprisingly, lighthouses. Then it hits me: "rustic oceanic atmosphere." (Okay, so that's what it says on the menu. So sue me.) Speaking of menus, I'm loving the Lighthouse's lunch edition. The level of sophistication is greater than I'd anticipated, what with the red Peruvian trout and Cajun prawn pizza. And the dinner menu is even more in-depth, featuring a list of stuff that makes my mouth water—paella, Hawaiian big-eye tuna, bouillabaisse and California striped bass with a mandarin fennel glaze. Very nice. And the wine list seems reasonably priced, too—I see a bottle of Australian Rosemount shiraz-cabernet is \$23 and I know the same bottle will run you about \$14 or so in the liquor store, so Billingsgate obviously isn't going crazy with the markup. Being the soup junkie that I am, I start off with a small bowl of lobster bisque. The lovely orange mixture is described as having been prepared in the traditional French style, with cognac, cream and rich lobster broth. Topped with some finely chopped fresh parsley, it's incredibly flavourful. Rich yes, but it doesn't weigh me down at all, which is good because I have a pickerel fillet on the way. (Note: you can get a bigger portion of the bisque as a meal. I saw one come out of the kitchen. Huge.) "That's a good choice," the server tells

me as I order the fish, prepared in a tangery butter and served with green apple relish. The large, colourful plate features the northern Alberta pickerel, a side of rice and a medley of vegetables. Not just your cheap, run-of-the-mill veggies, either, but a mix of red pepper, snow peas, zucchini, cauliflower, broccoli, carrots and squash. The pickerel is good and tender, the white meat flaking apart as you gently prod it with the fork. I'm missing something, though. And unfortunately, it doesn't dawn on me until later that there was no green apple relish on the side. Damn. It would've tasted great with the pickerel... which is probably why it appears on the menu in the first place, right? Still, I douse the fish with some lemon and it's just fine. **Average Price: \$\$\$** (Reviewed 11/13/03)

CAFÉ ORLEANS

12208-Jasper Ave • 452-3160

The menu at Café Orleans has a wide variety of standard N'awlins-style food, which always turns my culinary crank. Kate starts with a spicy chicken salad, while I can't take my eyes off the chicken and sausage gumbo. A cup is \$4.95 but the bowl costs just a buck more, and I've always been a sucker for the upsell. I'm soon having second thoughts about my decision, but not because the gumbo isn't satisfactory—on the contrary, the thick, hearty, ultra-spicy mix is a real attention-getter, leaving my nose a little runny and my nasal passages incredibly clear—but strictly because of its size. I take a few big swigs of my Buffalo draft to combat the lingering burn. The spicy chicken salad is generally a hit too, the crunchy candied pecans offering a textural balance with the tender, fiery chicken. One small beef about the salad: the orange vinaigrette is on the watery side and pools up on the bottom of the plate. Somewhere in the middle of the evening, it feels as though the ceiling is caving in. We speculate wildly as to what's going on until I remember that Arthur Murray's is

directly overhead and Fridays are apparently a big night in Edmonton's dance class scene. The pounding subsides quickly and before I know it, our blackened lamb rack and rice and beans are at the table. The lamb, served with a cinnamon-flavoured sauce, is awesome—tender and perfectly medium rare with that strong, distinctive taste. As for the rice and beans... well, it's not the vegetarian dish I had imagined, what with the pieces of smoky-tasting sausage accompanying it. Not that I have a problem with that. We've already decided that the bread pudding is a must. It's a relatively light and delicious version of the renowned sweet, unlike the horrible clump of dense bread I sampled a few years back at one of the more popular downtown steakhouses. **Average Price: \$\$\$-\$\$\$** (Reviewed 02/16/04)

DARIEN'S COCKTAILS AND FINE FOODS

5552 Calgary Trail South (Plaza 55) • 439-8675

Darien puts a lot of serious effort into his wings. He tells me his exclusive mix of spices for the various flavours on the menu is completely secret—he doesn't even tell the kitchen staff what they consist of. The variations are numerous: BBQ, honey garlic, teriyaki, salt and pepper, lemon and pepper, Cajun. Then you get into the heat: there's mild, medium and hot, and then you cross over into an entirely different realm with Chernobyl, Meltdowns and the mack daddy of 'em all, the Thermo-Nuclear Meltdowns, which are served with—no word of a lie—plastic gloves and a waiver. Our group discusses wing protocol and decide that the six of us will go with some of the tamer varieties before we jump into a couple dozen Chernobyls and then a dozen Thermo-Nuclear Meltdowns. We safely dance through the preliminary round but fear grips the table in anticipation of the killer wings to come. We all sign the waiver, whereupon Darien brings the wings over personally. (He's the only one who makes the Thermo-Nuclear Meltdowns, by the way.) I can't say I've ever smelled such a scent—it's reminiscent of death. We suit up with the gloves and John goes for it. Steve does the same soon after, and following a helluva lot of deliberation, I munch on a drummie. How to describe the taste? Well, John, immediately begins to sweat. Steve is making alarming sounds I've never heard him make and I'm genuinely scared for him. As for me, the burn is beyond anything I've ever experienced before. Tears flow from my eyes and saliva builds up in my mouth at a sickeningly quick pace. Thankfully, we had milk with us, which was one of Darien's tips. Water and beer only add to the pain, he told us—a little-known fact that you'd do well to keep in mind if you're masochistic enough to try a Thermo-Nuclear Meltdown yourself. **Average Price: \$\$** (Reviewed 03/04/04)

82 BBQ AND NOODLE HOUSE

9118-82 Ave • 448-9988

With the growing tickle in my throat letting me know sickness would overtake me soon, I decided I needed a big, spicy bowl of some type of Asian soup. Steve

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My brilliant Korea

Playing hooky from vegetarianism at the Bul-Go-Gi House

By DAVID DiCENZO

Once came very close to moving to South Korea. Mired in one of those twentysomething pre-midlife crises, I—like a jillion other wayward folk before me—figured I could teach ESL in Seoul, make some dough and then eventually get on with the task of growing up. I packed up and went to Edmonton instead.

Funny how a woman can throw a wrench in your plans.

Though the growing-up part was never a guarantee, I would've had no beef at all with moving to the Asian country. Well, one: the host South Koreans knocked the Italians out of the last World Cup thanks to the most controversial, one-sided display of refereeing in soccer history. I still cringe when I think of it. But other than that, South Korea would be a great place to call home for a while, especially with its fantastic cuisine.

My buddy Colin and I were up for some Korean barbecue, so we did what any sensible Edmontonian would and headed towards Bonnie Doon. The **Bul-Go-Gi House** has been serving up fantastic fare for decades and in the process have become a local institution. Even if you were completely unaware of the establishment's distinguished history, you'd know it's been around for a while as soon as you enter it. The wood paneling on the walls and banquet room chairs indicate that an interior designer has never come within a mile of the premises. Yet the vibe is good. It's packed on an early weeknight and there's a definite family flavour as one large table celebrates a birthday while at the one next to us, a cute little dude is playing with dinosaur and Hulk figures as his par-

ents eat away.

"I want some pork," Colin says as he flips through the menu, taking full advantage of the fact that his vegetarian wife is out of town for work.

Done and done. We quickly decide on the pork chops from the three Korean barbecue choices, which also include ribs and chicken. With that selection, we get kim chee, bean sprouts and a container full of rice. I can't wait. We're in need of some noodles as well, so we go with the Be-Been-Cham-Pong, a hot and

RESTAURANTS

spicy dish with veggies and an assortment of meat and seafood. The hot pots sound incredible and we feel the need for one of those too. I ask the waiter for the Dae-Goo-Mae-Woon-Tang, a spicy soup with black cod. He wants us to be sure.

"Have you tried that before?" he asks.

"No," I respond, initially a little worried. "Is it good?"

"I want some pork," Colin says as he flips through the menu, taking full advantage of the fact that his vegetarian wife is out of town for work.

"I like it," he says.

That's good enough for me.

THE FOOD COMES in what seems like a heartbeat, which is perfect because I'm famished. We spoon out a little of everything from the ample platters. Then I have at the hot pot, digging the ladle down deep so I can scoop up some of the lovely black cod at the bottom. The broth is an incredibly vibrant orange colour and it's as pleasing to the palate as it is to the eyes. The taste of the fish is distinct amongst the tofu, cabbage, mushrooms and zucchini but it's not overpowering. Really nice, though really hot.

Orange seems to be a theme with

our dishes—the barbecue pork chops sport a similar bright hue. I know some of the ingredients that typically go into a Korean barbecue—soy, sesame oil and toasted sesame seeds—but I have no idea what they use to get the colour. A spice? A sauce in the marinade? Who knows? It reminds me a little of a tandoori dish, though the coating on the charbroiled pork is wetter than you'd find on an Indian dish. There's a richness to it that seems magnified when you get a bite that contains some fat.

It's excellent.

I do get confused when we start digging into the Be-Been-Cham-Pong, though. Mixed into the thick noodles are various vegetables, like finely julienned carrots and green pepper chunks, as well as pork, chicken and seafood (namely squid, shrimps and mussels). Colin avoids the latter three. "I don't eat invertebrates or mollusks," he defiantly explains. "Have you ever seen a lobster? Their face looks like a strip of bacon."

Man, the guy just can't get pork outta his head. His wife would kill him if she knew. I tell him that we could've easily went with a dish that would be more accommodating to his tastes but he says it's no big deal and continues picking

out the seafood. Hey, more for me.

After a few servings of each of the dishes, we start to slow down. Our waiter brings the tab (\$43 and change with a couple of beers) and placed on top of the small bill tray are two sticks of gum.

"Whoa, Juicy Fruit," I say, the familiar flavour burst reminding me of my childhood days.

I walk out of the Bul-Go-Gi House feeling tremendously satisfied. And comforted in the knowledge that I didn't have to go to Seoul to get a wicked Korean meal. ☺

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DISH WEEKLY

had heard there was a new noodle house down Whyte—and it seemed like the perfect remedy to the evil brewing inside me. The menu is packed with all sorts of standard Chinese fare and it's too bad we're just a pair popping in for a quick bite because the BBQ duck dinner for four (at what seems like a reasonable \$65.75) looks tasty. Instead, we split a few dishes: the empire chicken, a BBQ pork chow mein and, to curb my spicy soup craving, a medium-sized bowl of the seafood hot and sour concoction. The server brings me a huge pot of loose leaf jasmine tea, helping me soothe the irritation in my throat prior to the main event. The food arrives quickly, starting with the soup. This hot and sour version has your typical tofu and strands of thinly sliced Chinese mushrooms, along with peas, shredded carrots, calamari and baby shrimp in an ultra-thick, almost gelatinous broth. For the short while that the soup remained hot (temperature-wise), my throat feels much better. After getting through a bowl or two each, the empire chicken and the chow mein arrive. The former, served on a small, oval platter with breaded chicken chunks, mushrooms, green peppers, carrots, water chestnuts, baby corns and peanuts, is supposed to be spicy. (It had the little red chilis beside the name on the menu, for Crissakes.) It's good, yes, but provides little in the way of a kick. I have to be honest—I wasn't too impressed with the chow mein platter, either. The amount of BBQ pork amongst the bok choy and other veggies looks scant and upon further digging, we find our initial assessment to be correct. I did like the crunchy noodles, however, a nice contrast to the rest of the dish. **Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 01/08/04)

FLAVOURS MODERN BISTRO

10354-82 Ave • 439-9604

You want brave? Try opening a restaurant a few weeks before Christmas, which is exactly what the owners of Flavours Modern Bistro have done on the famous Old Strathcona stretch. Sure, you get the Christmas push, but January is downtime for most establishments. Then again, there's a reason rents on Whyte are so high: never-ending traffic. I walked into Flavours (kudos to them on the inclusion of the "u," by the way), the former location of the Bagel Tree, and was immediately impressed by the look of the swanky new spot, what with the cozy blue chairs, dark hardwood décor (both tables and floor), and the high ceiling complete with oddly-shaped alcoves on the walls. I have an intelligent, concise menu in front of me, offering a selection of salads, apps, "flavourwiches" and a few tasty-looking entrées (oh, and two varieties of eggs Benedict). I almost bite on the braised lamb shanks with a

white bean and lentil ragout but I always get lamb, so I go instead for the chicken pancetta sandwich (sorry, flavourwich), featuring a grilled chicken breast, pancetta, smoked mozzarella with a roasted red pepper and garlic mayo on multi-grain bread. Basically, it's a high-end "club." In a fowl mood himself, Steve selects the five-pecan crusted chicken, a real earthy-looking dish that was served with a brown pommery mustard sauce. More people begin to file in and I decide that Flavours is a solid addition to Whyte's dining scene and not just because people are trudging along in minus-40 weather to get there. I can't think of many, if any, places on the strip that combine such an obvious level of sophistication with so little in the way of pretension and overly expensive items. The well-proportioned dishes top out at about \$16 or \$17 while the top price on the wine list is about \$40 or so, instead of a starting point. You could easily spend more for less. **Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 01/29/04)

IL PORTICO

10012-107 St • 424-0707

Six years in the River City and I'd never given this house of reputedly choice Italian cuisine a go. I can't get over the complexity of the menu, which deserves some in-depth description. From tantalizing apps like the beef carpaccio with fresh arugula and white truffle oil, right through to wildly creative entrées such as the pan-roasted, com-fed, free-range chicken breast with lemon and rosemary, porcini mushroom risotto, parmesan fried zucchini and sundried tomato dressing, it all looks so inviting. Our attentive server, who has a fairly overt swagger and air of confidence that I figure pretty much comes with the territory, brings us two plates of olive oil and balsamic vinegar and some delicious crunchy bread to start. There's eight of us at the table but he suggests we pace ourselves and begin with the appetizer platter for four. And what a fantastic spread it is. The fried calamari is accompanied by a piquant dip, while the rest of the plate features bruschetta, mixed olives and a bevy of grilled treats, including prawns, Italian sausage, vegetables (eggplant, portobello mushroom and yellow zucchini) and a magnificent grilled radicchio starter stuffed with mozzarella and prosciutto. I see a couple of the popular pastas further down the table, one with linguine and a copious amount of shrimp, and another penne version with tenderloin tips and mushrooms in a spicy tomato sauce. I, like a few others, decide on the mahi tuna special. The pepper-encrusted steak is seared to medium rare perfection and placed on a bed of mashed potatoes, green beans and finely shredded carrots, which resembles a little nest. A thin butter cream sauce encircles the entire set of

items on my plate and makes for a lovely presentation. We only order two sweets in total, but both are showstoppers. At one end is the cappuccino crème brûlée with Frangelico whipped cream and a chocolate biscotti. I take a pass on anything featuring chocolate, but only because I have a hunch that the limoncello sorbetto, with a raspberry vanilla bean consommé and iced blueberries, will offer one helluva clean finish. **Average price: \$\$\$-\$\$\$\$** (Reviewed 02/26/04)

MILL CREEK CAFÉ

9562-82 Ave • 439-5535

Other than a bevy of nice-looking sweets and baked goods, sandwiches are pretty much the order of the day at Mill Creek Café. Kate orders the Montreal smoked meat sandwich, while I eventually get around to choosing the salmon salad. Then come the questions. "Swiss, cheddar or cream cheese?" the counter girl asks. Kate says Swiss, I say cream. "Tomato, cucumber and sprouts?" Yup. "Pickles?" Sure. "Hot, honey or Dijon mustard?" Kate says yes to the former and after a bit of deliberation, I pass, figuring there's no need to add mustard to the salmon. "Mayo and butter?" Neither. Mill Creek bakes everything fresh each day and as I attempt to wrap my mouth around the massive slices of grainy whole wheat bread with pieces of carrot in it, I think to myself that it looks awfully inviting. I had taken note of the fact that Kate asked for hot mustard and I patiently awaited her reaction. Sure enough, it came. "Whoa," she says after the first or second bite. It's actually really hot stuff—I try a nibble and some of the mustard actually burns a small nick on my lip. These sandwiches are huge and because baked goods are in our immediate future, we pack up the remainders and head back to the counter. This time, I'm only slightly more decisive—a piece of chocolate cherry loaf (a mere buck and change) and a slice of lemon meringue pie, though the chocolate peanut butter bars were crying out at me. **Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 12/04/03)

SCHÄNKS ATHLETIC CLUB

9927-178 St • 444-2125

"The thing I love about Schänks," my friend Steve says, "is that other than the track, there's not a bigger cavalcade of problem gamblers anywhere." How prophetic. Just as we sit down in front of one of the many massive TV screens with the game on (they have the sound up for the NFL tilt as opposed to the CFL playoff game, which in a way is too bad), I can't help but notice the freakshow going on one table over. The guy in question is wearing a leather tricoloured Miami Dolphins hat, his dirty jeans are wide open and his ample gut is hanging out, and in

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between nervously sipping coffee, hauling on cigarettes and choosing plays on his Q81 machine, he appears to be rubbing himself down, head included, with a bottle of Absorbine Jr. But I'm more chuffed about the meager order of hot, boneless wings that we start out with. Nine bucks and there's nothing more than a handful of overdone, deep-fried chicken chunks with some hot sauce and a side of ranch. Luckily, one my superstars has already scored a touchdown so I'm in a good mood, just like the hardcore Canadian fans celebrating Saskatchewan's route of Winnipeg. The quality slightly improves with the next round of eats. I go with the peppercorn jack burger, while Steve tries the spolumbo submarine sandwich. I haven't had a burger in a while, so it's a treat to sink into the big patty, which was seasoned with—get this—"course" pepper and a Jack Daniels barbecue sauce. I wonder for a second if the typo was on purpose. Nah. My mixed greens on the side have about as much spring as the Blue Bombers offence, but the crispy order of kettle chips makes up for it. The home-made chips are nice and hot, served with a bowl of a real spicy onion, cream cheese dip. It's definitely the "play of the day" in this highlight package. **Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 11/06/03)

SMOKEY JOE'S HICKORY SMOKEHOUSE

15135 Stony Plain Road • 413-3379

I figure—er, I mean, I reckon—Smockey Joe's was conceived as a replica of old-fashioned prairie cuisine, or at least an homage to it. License plates from all over the continent dot the walls and the menu, bound in wood, has headings like "Samwiches" and "Young Un's Dinners." The ranch theme is a little schmaltzy but for a guy soon to vacate the province, it's enough to bring a small tear to my eye. The coolest thing has to be the pink butcher paper they use for tablecloths—that's a nice touch. My comedic dining buddy Steve is along for this trail ride and he busts a gut when he spots the veggieburger on the menu. "I bet you it's never been ordered," he says. Well, neither of us are gonna be the first so instead, we put all our eggs in one high-cholesterol basket: the sampler for two. It includes, in no particular order, two roasted quarter chickens, pork ribs, turkey, ham, beef and two of Smockey Joe's famous ultra-hot wings. Oh, and garlic toast. "We're out of wings tonight so I'll give you another quarter chicken. Is that okay?" our host asks. Deal! You get your choice of three sides with the sampler so Steve and I agree on cornbread, beans and potato salad. I don't notice much green anywhere in the restaurant so we see no sense in having any on our plate. Back a century ago, a cowboy wouldn't have been clamouring for a side salad, right? I swear there's a strained look on our server's face as she lugs out the plate with what Steve refers to as "a pile of meat" on it. "There, go wild," she says. All of the homemade barbecue sauces are lined up in front of us—Smockey Joe's sells them on the premises, along a variety of the meats, including jerky—and it's time to get to work. On this snowy, frigid night, the platter gives me a much-needed dose of summertime. The spicy taste of the

smoked meats, the richness of the beans and the creamy potato salad make me forget that it got dark at 4:30 p.m. that day. **Average Price: \$\$\$** (Reviewed 12/11/03)

TROPIKA MALAYSIAN CUISINE

6004-104 St • 439-6699

As we meet up in the front entrance of Tropika and I'm amazed by how packed it is this jumping Friday night. I've been here before and I loved it—but that visit was quite some time ago. Years, in fact, and it seems Tropika's gotten a lot more popular since then. And why not? With the straw awning over the bar, the big woven chairs reserved for VIPs and the Hawaiian shirts on the waitstaff, it's like island party central in here. Before we even look at the tantalizing food menu, we giggle at the depth and variety of the drink list. Doctor Funk (and Doctor Funk's Sun, made with 151 rum), Bellini, Scorpion—they all look good. Birthday boy John finds his groove when he orders a Tropikolada, a drink that apparently comes from heaven. "You couldn't come up with anything that would make me happier," John says after slurping up the last bit of what one table member calls "an Orange Julius with alcohol." I figure food will make us even happier. Right out of the gate, we try some starters: a dozen satays (pork, beef, chicken and lamb), five Indonesian spring rolls and two bowls of Singapore Laska, a hearty soup with vermicelli noodles. The crunchy peanut sauce goes well with the satays and the spring rolls are incredibly neat, stuffed with pan-fried pork, Chinese mushrooms and shredded jicama, then deep-fried extra-crispy with peanuts on the outer shell. The Singapore Laska is a feast with shrimp, tofu and fish cakes all married together in a tasty broth. My favourite, however, is the Kari Lembu, a sensational dish of melt-in-your-mouth curry with beef. We also ordered something known as Nasi Goreng, a local recipe of Malay fried rice and a few delectable side dishes, including steamed spinach and Sambal Bunchies, firm green beans with prawns and Sambal sauce. While each of these creations rocks (very spicy stuff), the most memorable

item is the Sayur Lemak hot pot, which comes to the table in a small kettle filled with vegetables and prawns simmered in a Malay coconut sauce. Oh, it was awesome, the broth so rich and colourful—by far the pièce de résistance. **Average Price: \$\$** (Reviewed 10/09/03)

WHITE SPOT

3921 Calgary Trail • 432-9153

True, the White Spot is a chain but it's a western Canadian one, which isn't so bad. Founder Nat Bailey was a crafty Vancouver entrepreneur who got the business up and running way back in the '30s, a few years after opening the country's first drive-in restaurant following a car ownership boom in the Lower Mainland. Smart guy. It's since expanded throughout B.C. and into Alberta, with the Calgary Trail locale being the only one of its kind in Edmonton (and the farthest east of any White Spots). This particular branch understandably has a bit of a hockey motif going on, with Original 6 jerseys displayed alongside some old-school metal blade skates and various pictures adorning the walls. I figure they must have that new Joe station tuned in on the radio. Someone told me it's "a mix of all sorts of crap" and when the rotation goes from old Depeche Mode to Macy Gray and then to Phil Collins's "Easy Lover," I'm convinced. I go big, passing up on some the staple breakfast items in favour of the renowned pancake sandwich, which the menu describes as a stack of buttermilk pancakes with an egg on top and a choice of bacon or sausage on the side. Whenever I indulge in some pancakes, I tend to wanna eat 'em up real fast. The reason being, pancakes get cold quickly. Not at White Spot, however. Your syrup comes to the table in a little personal dispenser—and get this: it's warmed up in the kitchen. That's such a simple touch but it honestly does cure the one and only problem I have with pancakes. It's like those glasses filled with fluid that you put upside-down in the freezer—the only problem with beer is that it gets warm, but in one of those glasses, it only gets colder as you drink it. These are ingenious ideas, people. **Average Price: \$** (Reviewed 02/12/04)

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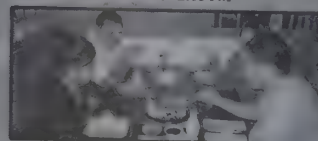
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Big Rock reminds you not to drink and ski.

Fernie



Photos by Duncan Stewart

Even without fresh snow, you'll get bowled over

By DUNCAN STEWART

It's ironic that my ski pal and I drove through a lot more snow to get to the Fernie Alpine Resort than we skied on once we got there. Apparently, vast volumes of powder had smothered the area just four

days before we arrived. Then, just two days before we got there, rain packed down the powder and converted the lower slopes to ice.

That's the way it goes sometimes, but at least the top half of the mountain was in good shape. And fortunately, limiting yourself to the top half of Fernie's monstrous ski hills is no limitation at all.

Fernie has five bowls carved across the top of the ridge from one hill to the next: Siberia Bowl, Timber Bowl, Currie Bowl, Lizard Bowl

and Cedar Bowl. Each one offers different views, conditions and sun/shadow patterns. Of course, everyone from lifties to mountain management was quick to point out that just a couple days ago, conditions were fabulous, magnificent, unbelievable and incredible with snow so deep that people in guest services couldn't see "that chairlift right there" because of the drifts against the windows.

"Thanks," we grumbled. "Thanks for keeping us informed."

Knowledge may be power to someone, somewhere, but right then, right there, it didn't make us feel powerful at all.

FERNIE TYPICALLY GETS enough snow in a winter to cover a three-storey building. While that may be great news to us visitors, you'd think it would discourage people from actually *living* there—after all, somebody has to shovel that stuff. But there are entire neighbourhoods of luxury homes springing up with ski trails and tunnels running right through them. Even if you can't live there, skiing through canyons of luxury houses of glass, stone and logs is an enjoyable diversion. It certainly emphasizes the trend in modern ski resorts.

It used to be that ski hills were developed for skiing and accommodations were added for convenience. Now huge resorts are developed just to sell real estate, and skiing and golf are just there to draw buyers. Seems to me that if real estate sales are the driving force behind ski resorts, then why are lift tickets \$50? They're making millions by developing raw land into small lots for \$500,000 houses in high-density settings. Under those profitable circumstances, lift tickets could be free.

Of course, it'll never happen—not as long as we keep pouring in from B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, Washington, Idaho, Montana and Oregon to ski Fernie. No doubt there were license plates from other areas as well, but we only walked across a quarter of the parking lot. One woman we met said she, her husband and two kids drive from Winnipeg every January just to ski Fernie, drawn by the variety of terrain, relatively mild weather and the fact that they'd never had disappointing conditions.

Considering all the hotels and houses that are revamping Fernie to take advantage of its fabulous skiing, there must be a lot of people who agree with her. And while there are plenty of ski-in, ski-out options on the hill, there are plenty of other accommodations to choose from because the hill is barely out of town. My buddy and I were put up on the house by Best Western's Fernie Mountain Lodge at the north end of the city, which was as far away from the ski hill as you can get. Yet the driving time was still only five minutes and, at the end of that hop, we were looking at 2,504 acres of ski terrain fed by 10 lifts, including everything from a platter to a high-speed quad.



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There are spacious glades here that are as inviting as a walk in the park and steep glades that I wouldn't enter even with ropes and crampons. But somebody had—somebody with a snowboard strapped to his feet and probably a reinforced sack for his brass you-know-whats.

which rises 8,763 feet to drop you off in a potpourri of options: glades, bowls, moguls, intermediate groomed runs and long, easy slopes that take you home. Other routes lead to other chairs taking you to other parts of the mountain, and soon you're moving easily across the

mountain from one bowl to another without returning to base.

If you're into numbers, the total vertical is 2,816 feet (or, if you prefer, 857 metres) while elevation reaches 6,316 feet (1,925 metres). If you're just into great skiing under an awe-inspiring cliff, with a panoramic

view of a vast valley framed by the Rocky Mountains and rich blue skies and bright sunshine, then the only numbers that really matter might be these: March 18 to 21, freeskiing competition; March 20 to 21, *Ski Canada* magazine demo days; March 22 to 28, *Ski Canada* ski testing;

March 27 to 28, RCR demo days (skis and boards from Rossi, Solomon, Head and Atomic); April 3, the Snow Jam outdoor music festival and crazy fun events on the slopes; April 17, the Powder, Pedal, Paddle relay race for teams of five; and April 20—the last day of winter lift operation. ●

IN ROUGHLY THE MIDDLE of Fernie's vast mountain, the Great Bear Express Quad takes you almost to the top. From there, you can grab the Face Lift handle tow and get even closer to the top. After that, you have the option of joining a file of backpacking snowboarders who, like hungry prospectors hiking White Pass to the Klondike, break trail up the steepest slope to the base of Lizard Face. That imposing, perpendicular backdrop, a sheer wall of granite running between the Polar Bear peak and Grizzly Bear peak, looms over the little people like something out of *Lord of the Rings*. (It's so high that it redefined the limits of the sky and so steep that nothing stuck to it but shadows.)

When you're far enough back to see how wide it is, you might feel a wave of pity for the pioneers who encountered such a formidable barrier on their trek west. Whether you hike to its base or not, you can still ski south and make your way over the Timber Bowl Express quad,

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Photos by Lila Gregoire



Silver Star Nordic

Cross-country sprites reach dizzying heights

By LISA GREGOIRE

Alpine types often coo about mystical mountaintops they've experienced: the chill winds, the shimmering ice fog, the expansive, breathtaking views. We cross-country skiers are like their badly-dressed, underprivileged cousins—soft boots, narrow, edgeless skis and flat, prairie trails. But the Silver Star Mountain Resort, with its quaint, colourful village just northeast of Vernon, B.C., offers Nordic skiers something rare

and precious: a chance to shrug off the pity of downhill sliders and ski the top of the mountain. Mind you, that requires riding something called a chairlift. More on that later.

It was cloudy in Vernon when we arrived. We could have completed the eight-hour drive from Edmonton in

AREA

one day but chose to spend a night at the SameSun Backpacker Lodge in Revelstoke on the way—a modern, well-kept hostel with two kitchens and a pool table. On our layover, we got to experience a little 'Stoke culture when rival gangs of street toughs sparred outside our bedroom window after the bars closed.

A quick one-coffee, two-hour jaunt brought us to Silver Star the next morning. As we climbed the steep, winding road from Vernon to the resort, we ascended through a layer of bubbling cumulus into a blazing blue sky above. Clever Vernoners (Vernonites? Vernonians?), we learned later, make a habit of checking weather reports at the Star and heading uphill to the peaks when their valley is encased in gray.

After settling into a comp kitchen-and-fireplace suite at the Silver Creek Hotel—I don't know which was more luxurious, the rooftop hot tubs or the fact you could ski right to the front door—we grabbed a few sandwiches and a map of the trails and faced our nemesis: the six-person express lift to the summit. It's been a few years since I was on a chairlift. I used to be a downhill type, but they didn't have six-pack lifts when I was schussing south on my now-antique, non-parabolic Head 180s.

My husband, who's only been

downhill skiing once in his life, considered the lift with dread, especially after vigorous snowplowing down the steep run leading to the Comet Express. Sure, it was just a beginner alpine run innocently dubbed Easy Street, but the pitch is menacing when you've got neither edge nor ankle support. We managed to stay upright and proudly joined the throng of slouching snowboarders and robust skiers below.

Backpacks in one hand, poles in the other, we inched forward through the lift queue, drawing curious looks from affluent fashionistas and cowboy-hatted locals. It wasn't



long after we relaxed in our seats and started soaking up the tidal wave of scenery—the Monashee Mountains and Selkirks beyond—that we realized we'd have to, at some fast-approaching moment, get off. This, I gladly report, we accomplished with only minimal chaos. Trails aptly named Comin' Round the Mountain and Paradise, lived up

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The people in your neighbourhood

Nothing says skiing like hot tubs and chairlifts and, curiously, the two have a lot in common. The cozy quarters of both inevitably elicit a "Where ya from?" and whether you're enjoying the salty spray of the bubbles or the icy spray of snow, both venues provide an opportunity to get intimate with strangers.

Perhaps too intimate. At Silver Star, I had occasion to enjoy both and the line was crossed only once. It was in a rooftop hot tub during a light snowfall. There were three couples including us, the other two several decades older. Their conversation unfolded thusly:

LADY (to her husband): "I'm going down to shower. Do you want another rum and coke?"

OTHER LADY: "Oh, are you showering? I was going to go."

HUSBAND #1: "Why don't you both just shower together?"

LADY: "Well, it wouldn't be any

fun if no one was watching."

There were a few strained titters and stolen glances around the circle. Thankfully a family of four from Vancouver Island entered the fray and put the kibosh on any further randy talk.

While on a cross-country ski holiday at Silver Star, I sent my husband on a long-distance Nordic trek, dusted off my old downhill skis and sneaked away to see whether I could still handle the speed and compression. It was, as they say, the bomb—so much easier than propelling yourself forward on flat trails.

As a lone skier, I talked regularly with my liftmates, who seemed to fall equally into two categories: people from Vernon or surrounding area and people from far away. The ones in the latter category hailed from everywhere from New Zealand and Australia to England, France, Germany and the United States. The locals were immeasurably and understandably grateful to

to their names as we gently descended through frothy white forests, sailing through something the resort calls "champagne powder."

IT'S BEEN NEARLY 75 YEARS since the first recorded skier carved the powder of what was then Aberdeen Mountain. Vernon resident Bill Thorburn allegedly followed a forestry trail to the lookout, spent the night and then skied down the next day in 1931. The first rope tow was built in 1946. Back then, you could ski all day for 50 cents (compared to \$56 today). With 11 chairlifts, T-bars and magic carpet lifts, Silver Star claims it can deliver 14,000 skiers and boarders to the top of the mountain every hour.

The first cross-country trails were cleared in 1981 and surveying continued in earnest for the next few years. Silver Star hosted a World Cup

Cup Nordic skier and Silver Star's Nordic manager, says the mountain is famous for its downhill runs but is slowly earning a national and international reputation for cross-country skiing. Canada's Nordic team has been using Silver Star as an early-season training centre for 14 years because of the mountain's notorious early November snow dump. The mountain averages more than 700 centimetres (23 feet) of snow from November to April.

"The word is slowly getting out there," says Bond, a Manitoban by birth who grew up in a small hockey town with no desire to play hockey. He started alpine skiing and then eventually switched to cross-country. "We're really just at the tip of the iceberg with our Nordic planning." Though he still competes, Bond, who is both sponsored by and works for

ning network of Nordic trails. You can take several trails from the resort down into the park's Sovereign Lake cross-country ski area. Unfortunately, one pass won't get you universal access. Big signs warn users they need both a resort and park pass when using both facilities.

The Nordic, snowboard and alpine components combined with a skating pond and tube slide park help

boost Silver Star's image as a family-oriented resort. It's compact, impeccably groomed, laden with snow and enjoys an average winter temperature of about -5°C. Hotels and pastel-coloured Victorian rentals and condos offer plenty of ski-in, ski-out accommodations right on the hill.

We divided our time between mountaintop runs and loops on the knoll adjacent to the town. The

knoll trails, which hug the contours of the hill, wind through silent stands of snow-heavy pine and frequently open up to views of the resort, the Monashee Mountains and other ranges. You can even descend into World Cup trails and pretend you're Bond, Glenn Bond, rushing for glory. Or you can stop at several picnic tables along the way and have a sandwich. It's your choice. ☉



cross-country event in 1991 and shortly thereafter it became a Nordic destination. The resort now boasts 55 kilometres of trails suitable for both classic and skate skiing including a four-kilometre lit night loop through multicoloured homes and mansions. And get this: they groom every trail every night.

Glenn Bond, a Canadian World

Silver Star, is excited about helping redesign and expand the Nordic trails there. Some trails, for example, cross downhill runs, and though he knows of no serious collisions, he'd prefer to avoid such intersections.

AT THE TOP of the mountain, the resort abuts the Silver Star Provincial Park, which contains another stun-



be living so near such a luscious hill.

At one point, I shared a chair with a couple of local snowboarders. Both were decked out in classy muted gray and lemon tones with quality boards and helmets. They were turned away from me at first and I was shocked when they addressed me in conversation. Soft wrinkles and gray hair put them likely in their sixth decade.

They'd been skiing Silver Star for 40 years, they said, switching to boarding about seven years ago. They wished me well at the top and then sailed away, hips bucking to and fro like a pair of teenagers. I was immediately ashamed of all the excuses I'd used to avoid trying the board. Gray-haired gumption will do that to you.

—LISA GREIGORE

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The **EASYRIDER** Condition Report

Local

Rabbit Hill - 60cm base, 0cm of new snow, all lifts and runs open
Snow Valley - 60cm base, 0cm of new snow, all lifts open

Alberta

Castle Mt. - 83-265cm base, 21cm of new snow, all lifts and 61 runs open
C.O.P. - 50cm base, 0cm of new snow, all lifts open
Fortress - 106-132cm base, 15cm of new snow, 5/5 lifts open
Lake Louise - 154-230cm base, 17cm of new snow, all lifts open
Marmot Basin - 83cm base, 8cm of new snow, 7 lifts & 84/84 runs open
Mt. Norquay - 126-164cm base, 13cm of new snow, 5/5 lifts & 28/28 runs open
Nakiska - 99cm of new snow, 13cm of new snow, 5/6 lifts & 32/32 runs open
Sunshine - 206cm base, 30cm of new snow, 12 lifts & 107 runs open

B.C.

Apex - 149cm base, 67/67 trails and 5/5 lifts open
Big White - 220cm base, 112/112 trails and 13/13 lifts open
Chrystal Mt - 93cm base, 3/3 lifts and 24/24 trails open
Fernie - 256cm base, 0cm of new snow, 10/10 lifts & 75/107 runs open
Kicking Horse - 177cm base, 14cm of new snow, 97/97 runs open
Kimberley - 115cm base, 5cm of new snow, 6 lifts & 75/75 runs open
Mt Washington - 302cm base, 50/50 trails & 8/8 lifts open
Panorama - 117cm base, 23cm of new snow, 9/9 lifts & 120 runs open
Powder King - 345cm base, 2/3 lifts & 24/24 trails open
Powder Springs - 330cm base, 35cm of new snow all lifts & 26/26 trails open
Red Mountain - 200cm base, 0cm of new snow, 4/5 lifts open
Silver Star - 177cm base, 107/107 trails & 11/11 lifts open
Sun Peaks - 152cm base, 10/10 lifts & 117/117 trails open
Whistler Blackcomb - 215cm base, 33/33 runs & 200/200 trails open
Whitewater - 226cm base, 0cm of new snow, all lifts open

U.S.A.

Big Mt - 231cm base, 0cm of new snow, 8/11 lifts & 88 runs open
Big Sky - 228cm base, 0cm of new snow, 17/18 lifts & 150 trails open
49 Degrees - 180cm base, 0cm of new snow, 4 runs open
Great Divide Ski Area - 127cm base, 80/139 trails and 4/6 lifts open
Lookout Pass - 243cm base, 0cm of new snow, 3/3 lifts & 23 runs open
Mt Spokane - 113cm base, 0cm of new snow, 44/55 runs open
Schweitzer Mt - 172cm base, 0cm of new snow, 5/6 lifts open
Silver Mt- 193cm base, 0cm of new snow, 6/7 lifts open
Sun Valley - 193cm base, 0cm of new snow, 19/19 lifts open


All conditions accurate as of Mar. 17, 2004



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SNOWZONE



By **JAMES RADKE**

Backcountry roads, take me home

When the blank canvas of a ski run beckons, its clean white sheet an invitation for artists to leave signature tracks, the most important piece of equipment you carry is between your ears. Powder and the backcountry at first glance seem simple and beautiful, but in reality they can hide some very real and life-threatening dangers. Being prepared to play safely should be the most important idea in your head.

James Radke is the full-time, on-hill snowboard and ski coordinator at Calgary's Canada Olympic Park (www.canadaolympicpark.ca) as well as COP's senior coordinator of recreational programs and services at its sports school and mountain bike park. He's been a professional snowboard instructor for 11 years. James can be contacted at mountainbike@coda.ca.



length (which also makes carving out kickers much easier).

Ski poles that convert into probes are becoming popular these days. But a true probe extends longer, and because it's stiffer the probe can be pushed through dense snow more easily than probe poles. Transceivers or avalanche beacons are a snowboarder's last lifeline in a slide. The digital readouts, peeps and flashing indicators guide the searcher to the victim. They are a must in a backcountry pack.

If you're new to winter in the backcountry or safety in powder, take

And it's better to prepare than repair—there are a number of measures a snowboarder can take to be prepared when the white fluffy stuff falls.

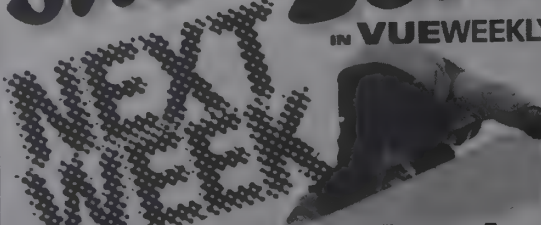
In the backcountry (or even on your favourite run in the mountains), the real danger comes from avalanches. But avalanches don't kill; it's when they interact with people that the danger arises. One thing a snowboarder can do is to be ready is to carry the proper equipment. Invest in a good backpack; find one that will hold what you need and then some. Look for straps, buckles, stash pockets, belts and even a whistle. It should carry your snowboard and shovel outside the main bag. Comfort is a must, so make sure it fits.

In the backpack a snowboarder should carry the avalanche essentials (food, extra clothing, a probe and an avalanche transceiver or avalanche beacon). A good shovel is a must. Find one that's light, strong and extends to more than three feet in

a course; there's no substitute for professional, hands-on instruction. Courses vary from a one-day avalanche awareness session to recreational avalanche courses that last two days or more. There are also week-long training courses for professional outdoor enthusiasts. The Canadian Avalanche Association also maintains an awesome website, www.avalanche.ca. Check it out before venturing into the unknown. Also check out the MEC website for loads of useful info and tips.

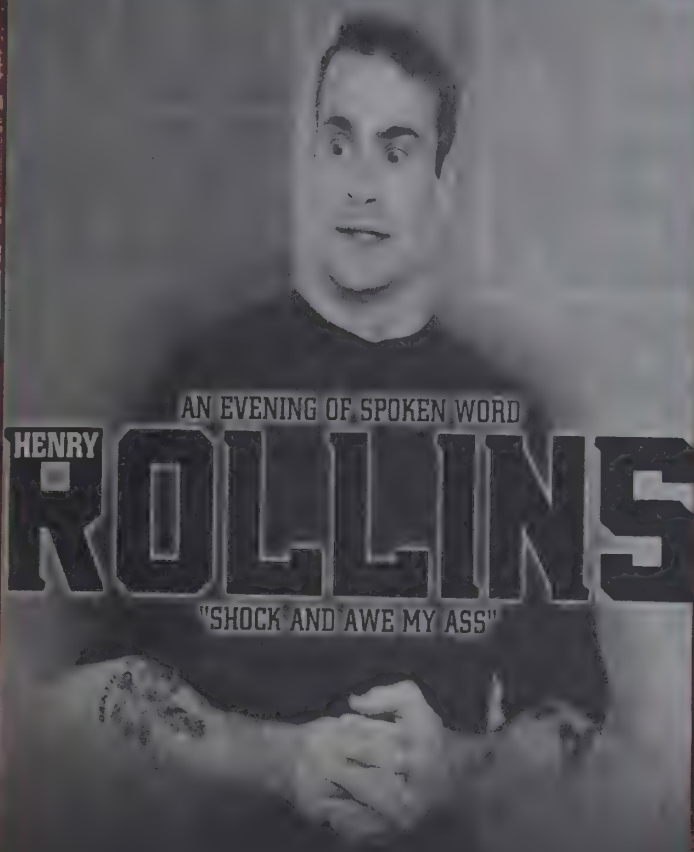
The bottom line, however, is that avalanche equipment aids are not passive protective devices. Unlike seatbelts, they won't save you by themselves. So get educated and get experienced. If you're going to spend any time in the backcountry (or even at your local resort), get the gear. It can save both your life and your buds. Always board with your friends, by the way, and make sure they know how to use their safety equipment. ☺

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MUSIC



Metallica gets their temper under control on *St. Anger* tour

By STEVEN SANDOR

Metallica is used to being in the line of fire. The band is the lightning rod for the anti-Internet piracy movement. They launched a suit against the infamous Napster online music sharing service, claiming that it allowed users to steal their copyrighted work. Metallica's hardline stance on piracy split their audience and got them called everything from heroic protectors of copyright to spoiled rich musicians who've lost touch with the new high-tech world.

They can deal with that. The band has had to deal with leadman James Hetfield's continuing battle with alcohol abuse and the tumultuous process of recording of their most recent effort, *St. Anger*, during which bass player Jason Newsted quit the band. Finally, they selected ex-Suicidal Tendencies player Rob Trujillo to fill the void.

Heck, they made a *movie* about that.

But according to guitarist Kirk Hammett, Metallica was more rattled when they heard that their music was being used by the American military to torture detainees at the Guantanamo Bay naval base. As with any allegations of torture, the accusations have been denied—but Hammett is deeply troubled that the band's name is part of the story.

"I think that it bothers me when you realize that you have got so big that you play a part in something, like when I heard that the military was torturing POWs in Guantanamo Bay using Metallica music," Hammett says in a phone interview from Reno, Nevada. "That was not a good

feeling, and I think it's because we have become too big, too popular. You realize that people will take your music and use it for whatever purposes they want; some of them will use it positively, some will use it negatively. You realize that you have no control over its use. I'm a liberal; I believe in the one commandment that thou shalt not kill, and that seems to be forgotten more and more around the world. So I was very troubled to know that our music was being used like that."

METALLICA HAS BEEN soldiering on for the better part of the last year in support of *St. Anger*. Because the members are now in their 40s (Hammett is 41), their "Alcoholica" days are long gone. The tour has been

PREVIEW METAL

streamlined so the band plays no more than four shows a week, which helps preserve Hetfield's voice. "I am totally whupped afterward," admits Hammett. "I need to eat right after the show because I have spent so much energy. And with the type of show we have now, being in the round, it demands a lot more out of me."

With a growing discography that now extends back 20 years, Hammett admits that it gets tougher and tougher to pick the songs they'll play from night to night. "We have been able to change the setlist each and every night," he says. "We want to be able to do a list that is comprehensive of all of our albums, and because this is a *St. Anger* tour, the emphasis is on the new songs, so we are guaranteed to play three or four songs from that album a night. But otherwise, we shuffle through our other albums and play what we feel like that night; we're conscious of the songs the fans want to hear, so we will play 'Enter Sandman,' 'One,'

'Battery' and 'Creeping Death.'"

The band's recent travails are the subject of a new documentary entitled *Some Kind of Monster*, set for major release later this year. The film, directed by Bruce Sinofsky and Joie Berlinger (the team behind the celebrated doc *Paradise Lost*, about the so-called "West Memphis Three," a trio of teenaged Metallica fans who were convicted of a triple homicide) is an honest look at the band behind the empire. "After a while, the camera became part of the furniture," Hammett says. "It was like a houseplant in the room."

WHEN I ASK how long Metallica can go on, Hammett evokes the memory of the band's first bassist, Cliff Burton, who was killed in a tour bus accident after the release of *Master of Puppets*, the band's landmark third album which is still considered their best. "Twenty years ago, we had a hard time looking past *Master of Puppets*," Hammett says. "That reminds me of a time Cliff Burton and I were talking in a long bus trip from the east coast to the west coast. We were talking about *Kill 'Em All* [the band's debut album] and I was wondering about what the next album would sound like. Then Cliff said, 'I wonder what the third album is going to sound like!' And that's ironic, because he wasn't around to play a large part in the fourth album. But now the band has so much new energy, and I think a lot of it has to do with the fact that Rob is a perfect fit. I feel like we can do this for another 10 years. I look at the Rolling Stones, the Who, even the Eagles—all those bands are still rocking even in their 50s. Look at Keith Richards—he's well into his 50s and he still rocks out playing guitar! Keith Richards is my idol!"

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BY PHIL DUPERRON
AND JERED STUFFCO

Drop secrets

One Drop • With Mayor McCa • Seedy's • Fri, Mar 19 "We're finally getting over our fear of being a jam band," proclaims One Drop's Nev Gibson over the phone from a tour stop in Saskatchewan. But before you write off One Drop as just a bunch of neo-Deadheads parading around the country in an old bus with an entourage of marijuana-smoking Phish fans, know this:

the band are not hippies. Despite mentioning an array of influences like hip hop, reggae, dub and punk, Gibson says that the "jam band" moniker has more to do with necessity than inspiration. "Sometimes," he says, "we'll have to play for three hours, and an hour and a half in we'll run out of material and we'll have to just wing it. A lot of our songs are completely written, but with others the format is kind of loose so we can change a few lines here or there and improvise for a while."

Genres aside, Gibson says that the band filters everything through a punk rock perspective they developed from playing in various punk bands in their youth. Still, don't expect them to jump at the opportunity to play a hardcore show. "On our last tour," Gibson says, "we played a show in Regina with a few really good hardcore bands, and we had to play last. When people see horns they automatically think we're a ska band, so most of the kids had left before we even went onstage. It's pret-

ty tough to keep the energy level up."

Currently on the road in support of their self-titled CD, the Victoria-based band is currently in the middle of a western Canadian jaunt, and they've got plans to dip down into the States before returning home later this month. However, with dates booked as far south as California, One Drop just might have to ditch out on a couple of dates. "We have one show booked just outside of San Francisco on the 27th of March and another show booked in Victoria for the next night," Gibson says. "I doubt we'll make it down there because it's going to cost about \$500 just to drive down there in our van." (JS)

Ruckus causes a rumpus

Ruckus Compilation CD Release Party • With Blueroom, Por Nada and Nothing at All: Stars (Sat, Mar 20) • With the Pasty Whites, Hills Have Eyes, Road to Nowhere and Pind: Ruckus on Whyte (Sun, Mar

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Danko Jones • Kingsknight Pub •
Wed. Mar 10 • 8:00 PM According to Danko Jones, everybody is sexy in heaven—even Jolly Ramones. But who is Jones to make such an earth-shattering proclamation? Take away his sexy swagger, his bang-on three-piece rock band, his hilarious songs about sex and how to get it in his room full of screaming fans, that crazy thing he does with his tongue that the girls in the front row get misty in the pants about, his weekly Swedish radio show, his Jung nomination—and what has he really got? Nothing, I tell ya. Except maybe his new disc *We Swear Blood* and that the girls who've been wanted when Rock 'n' roll—she's a tough mistress. (PD)

21, all ages) Dave Johnston and Andrea Zariwsky opened Ruckus on Whyte, their art/record store, last June with one idea in mind: stock it to the rafters with hot local talent. But short of walking out of the place with your arms loaded with discs there was no way to get a real idea of everything inside.

Until now. After successfully releasing Black Market Inc.'s debut disc last year, the Ruckus crew decided to give people a scattergun taste of the local indie scene by releasing *Ruckus Vol. 1: A Collection of Edmonton Music*. While Johnston (no relation to *Vue's* Dave Johnston) jokes about having "a screw loose" to take on this project, he's obviously passionate about promoting local acts and his business. "There's a shitload of talent in Edmonton and it seems like nobody outside of Edmonton realizes what it is," he says. "It's good for the store too, 'cause it further establishes the fact that it's the place to get whatever you're looking for that's local."

The disc, which features 23 bands ranging in style from country to hardcore, is an ambitious project and there are plans for another one next year. "We put as many songs as we could possibly squeeze on," Johnston says, "and there were still a couple bands that came looking after it was full."

Blueroom is one of the newest bands on the compilation. Named after the ambient blue lighting in their jam space, they've been playing an eclectic blend of electronic and organic music for less than a year now. The four-piece was originally united by their mutual appreciation for Radiohead, but guitarist/weird-noisemaker Nano says they quickly branched out into their own direction. "We're all bringing in different influences," he says. "I listen to a lot of post-experimental stuff and experimental electronic music and I try to bring that into the band."

While they strive to be unique and use eerie sounds and arrangements, Blueroom was careful not to put anything down on their demo they couldn't recreate onstage by recording everything but the vocals live off the floor. "We were trying to make an honest approach to this," Nano says, "so basically we give a club CD and that's exactly what we sound like live. Except it's just a lot louder and we get

into it a lot more."

Edmonton's underground scene is definitely thriving and diverse, but until recently most bands were built around tried and true variations on punk, ska, rock, metal, country and folk. Blueroom, by contrast, is just one of many new bands reaching farther afield. "I think people are just developing a more eclectic taste in music," Nano says. "They're listening to stuff coming out of Montreal, Toronto and London and going, 'This is where the music is going—let's try and write something similar to this.'" (PD)

The Berlin Floor?

The Floor • With Slow Fresh Oil •
Sidetrack Café • Sat, Mar 20
 Whether you're talking about cars or techno, one thing is certain: Germans know their stuff. Leave it to them, then, to be among the first to give props to local rockers the Floor, who released their celebrated EP *Autonomy Off/On* three months ago. According to the band's vocalist Matt Pahl, the release somehow piqued the interest of German label Monster Zero, which plans to issue a vinyl pressing of the EP with some added tracks from the band's first release, *Doll*. "They'll likely be bonus tracks, though," Pahl says, "because they wouldn't really fit together as one album."

So how did a German label catch wind of a band from Edmonton? "We still haven't found that out yet," Pahl says. "Some German listener with an ear for post-punk must have heard us and tipped them off." Meanwhile, halfway around the world from Germany, California-based webzine *Light Up the Sky* put *Autonomy* on their list of the best of 2003 alongside releases by buzz bands !!!, Franz Ferdinand and TV on the Radio.

Despite this flurry of business activity, the band has stayed hard at work on new material, with about half a dozen new tracks already completed since late fall. Describing the newer material as "a little more rhythmic and danceable, like Modern English meets mid-'80s Killing Joke with a dash of Gang of Four," Pahl says plans to re-enter the studio are already being made, but not before they hit the road this spring with dates

booked in Winnipeg, Regina, Calgary and Vancouver. "We're really trying to concentrate on the west right now," Pahl says. "We don't want to get into the situation where we play too much in Edmonton and people get sick of us."

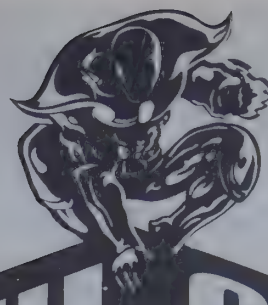
If you can't make it down to the Track, you can catch the Floor on TV as part of *Much Does Edmonton*, which airs this Sunday at 9 p.m. on MuchMusic. (JS)

Appetite for percussion

An Appetizer for Destruction •
With the Floor and Slow Fresh Oil •
Sidetrack Café • Sat, Mar 20
 Welcome to the jungle. Axl Rose is fat and useless, the rest of Guns 'N' Roses are playing as something called Velvet Revolver (who have an album due in May) but Edmonton will always have Gravy to save us from the horrible lack of vintage glam metal in our diet. The man they call Gravy is a drumming machine who plays with the likes of Slow Fresh Oil, Whitey Houston, the Skinny and Cordoba. Since he obviously doesn't have enough on his plate already, he's decided to bring *Appetite for Destruction*, a classic by any definition of the word, back to life in full Technicolor.

"It's my birthday on Sunday," Gravy says, "and a few years ago I had an idea of just putting on *Appetite for Destruction* and just playing along with it just for my friends at sort of a private party. I told Brent [Oliver] about it and he shit his pants about the idea and then he decided to book it in the Sidetrack. So on Saturday, that's what I'm doing—putting on the CD and blasting it through the PA and I'm gonna do my best to play along."

Anyone who knows Gravy knows he's not a shy guy, but after spending so many years behind the kit, he's not used to the spotlight. "I'm a little bit nervous about it," he says. "I mean, it's the first time I've ever done anything like this. I've played tons of shows but never by myself, y'know? It's gonna be kinda weird being at the front of the stage, having people watch me. Usually, being the drummer, you're at the back, kinda hidden by the other guys. Which is nice in a way. I dunno. We'll see how it turns out—maybe next year I'll do *Back in Black*." (PD)



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7 and 7 Is does the math on their passionate new disc, *Smashed to Pieces*

By JERED STUFFCO

When *Vue* sits down with local rock outfit 7 and 7 Is to chat about the release of their first CD, *Smashed to Pieces* (*In the Still of the Night*), the atmosphere seems a little tense. With two members having just celebrated their birthdays, apparently the weekend saw them all embark on a bit of a bender. "We're all in bitter mode today," sighs singer Sean Foster. "Or maybe we all just

have really bad hangovers." Whatever the reason, things don't get any better when I ask them why people should care about their new disc.

Most local groups would respond with a vitriolic tirade about how they're the best shit the city has ever seen. (Either that, or they'd jump me.) Instead, the five of them gather their collective thoughts and give me a considered answer.

PREVIEW **ROCK**

"Because we have passion for what we're doing," says the band's guitarist Damian Fraczek earnestly before singer Sean Foster finishes his train of thought. "We care about it," Foster

says. "When I think about good music and bad music, the difference is that good music has soul and bad music does not. I think we have the passion."

Spin the band's new disc and you'll probably agree that it's pretty spirited stuff. While *Smashed* likely won't win the First Annual Geddy Lee Award for Tightest Studio Performance, the tunes have swagger. The band borrowed the title *Smashed to Pieces* from a Viennese art exhibit by Lawrence Wiener, and over the EP's six cuts they do their best to do a little destruction of their own: frontman Sean Foster howls like a younger, less visceral Iggy Pop while the rest of the band kicks up one hell of a racket behind him.

AFTER AN ABORTED ATTEMPT at recording an album last year, the quintet again hunkered down with studio whiz kid Nik Kozub to try and capture their live energy. This time around, the band knew they would have to, as Emeril Lagasse would say, kick it up a notch. "We wanted to do something that we could be proud of," explains Foster. "Before, we just weren't ready."

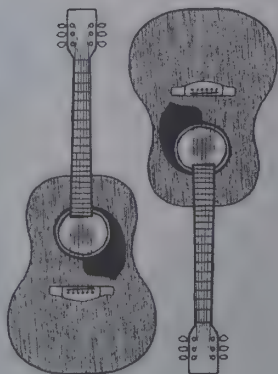
"Yeah, we don't even play those songs anymore," adds bearded guitarist Lance Kozak with a chuckle. "All of the songs were five minutes long and it was always verse-chorus-verse-chorus-verse-chorus and usually the verse or the chorus weren't any good."

In a lot of ways, *Smashed* is the sound of a young band that's just starting to find its feet. Keep in mind that, with the exception of Kozak (who played in the Wednesday Night Heroes), this is a group that had very little prior musical experience before forming two years ago. "Before this band, he'd never even played bass before," says Sean, glancing over at his older brother David. "Yeah, and I was supposed to play drums," adds Fraczek.

Although nothing is set in stone, the band plans to take their show on the road over the next year and continue writing. "We don't really have any set goals or limitations in the next year," says the elder Foster. "We're just going to see where it takes us."

"Yeah, but we don't have the limitations either," says Kozak. "We want to take this as far as we can." ☉

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Eve Fowler

Exhibit of beauty photos by women teaches us a few things about body image

By CAITLIN CRAWSHAW

Wit was an obsession—and it was kind of like it was a full-time job." So says Canadian actress Kristin Booth, speaking candidly about the eating disorder that plagued her for years. Often racked with guilt over missed trips to the

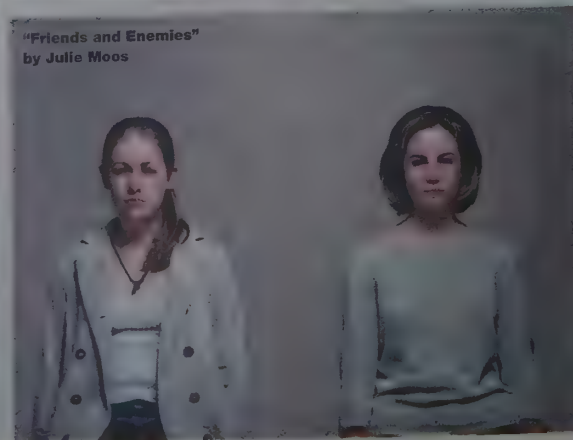
gym or stressed over food, Booth says the disease stripped the colour from her life. "It is no way for a person to live. I personally hit rock bottom and not only couldn't work and

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"Dixie Evans"
by Katie Murray



"Friends and Enemies"
by Julie Moos



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"Woman"
by Georgia Kokolis

be an actress and do what I loved to do, because of the way that I was psychologically and physically, but I couldn't live life. I didn't enjoy anything. When you're obsessed with what you're eating or you're not eating, everything else disappears and you don't derive any pleasure from anything. And it's sad."

Booth, who recently starred in a Canuck film with Hollywood aspirations called *Foolproof*, is helping promote **Beyond Compare: Women Photographers on Beauty**. The exhibit will start the Edmonton leg of its tour on March 20 and will be open for public viewing in Manulife Place for nine days. A joint venture between the National Eating Disorder Information Centre and Dove, the free exhibit featuring the work of Canadian photographers and internationally-renowned artists such as Annie Leibovitz is intended to raise awareness and funds for the NEDIC.

Photographer May Truong, whose work is featured in the show, says the exhibit aims to challenge an unrealistic and unhealthy standard of beauty for women. "We're bombarded by images every day," says Truong, "and it's hard not to let it sink into our subconscious. It's just natural instinct to always compare yourself to something else—to an ideal, to a stereotype, to something that we can never achieve, and to be better. And I think because we live in such a superficial world our image is something we feel we can always

change and improve upon.

"I think the most valuable thing about the show is getting a message across to women, saying that beauty isn't just within body image and stereotypes and superficial constructs," adds the Montreal-based photographer, who feels self-improvement should involve personal growth rather than physical alteration.

ANOTHER IMPORTANT ASPECT of the photo exhibit for Truong was the inclusion of women from a variety of racial and ethnic backgrounds. As a young Asian woman growing up in Canada, she says she had no Asian women role models to look up to. As a result, she felt pressure to adhere to the values and customs portrayed by white role models.

"When you don't have role models, you aim to have role models, so there's more assimilation," says Truong. "I grew up in a very white neighborhood and I tried to assimilate. The food I was eating was different and everything about me was not fitting in. So I tried to fit in the best I could, and I realize in hindsight how destructive that is—to feel different all the time and to feel that you don't belong. I guess growing up when you don't have a sense of identity you try to grasp onto one that seems to fit. So I feel there needs to be more role models out there for people of colour—for girls of colour, especially—and healthy ones, too. Not just supermodels and not just

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EDUCATION

actors and movie stars, but real people that will have an effect on them psychologically and morally."

DR. CARLA RICE, the clinical program specialist at the Sunnybrook Regional Women's Health Centre and Women's College Health Sciences Centre in Toronto, believes that our current standard of beauty reflects the white majority in North America. "The fact is that the ideal of beauty is not only a thin ideal of beauty, but it is also a white ideal of beauty and it is an ideal of beauty that is a *young* ideal," says Rice. But she warns that with globalization, this ideal is spreading beyond the borders of North America.

"I think that what we're seeing is the emergence of a monocultural ideal of beauty, at least within dominant media," Rice explains. "There are studies that suggest that there are an increasing number of countries in the world where especially middle-class and upper-class women are developing body image problems. And those are not only so called first-world countries or western countries."

Like Truong, Rice believes that visual culture has a significant effect on the health and well-being of young women. "I think that more than any other time in history, we in this time period are living in a profoundly visual culture," says Rice. "So I think that there is a connection between eating problems

and the media, just by virtue of the fact that we are so surrounded by idealized images of beauty in a way that historically women have never been before.

"More than ever before," she continues, "we have internalized this stream of unattainable images that constantly remind us of how we don't measure up. If we think about things like photography, film—even mirrors, for example.... Mirrors were something that were only available to the middle class and the upper class prior to the 20th century. And obviously film and photography were largely inventions of the 19th and 20th centuries, and they only became widespread over the course of the 20th century."

TO RICE, we're living in a time when "image determines our value." And as it stands right now, the valued image is one of nearly unattainable thinness, achieved only by a small handful of women. However, Rice is quick to emphasize that there is no causal relationship between visual media and eating disorders. In her view, eating disorders and body image problems are the product of a person's life experiences, expectations from others, family circumstances and a host of other factors. To Rice, media is more like the "background noise," rather than the sole culprit.

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"Protect Me From What I Want"
by Bridget Farr



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As a therapist and researcher on body image problems among women, Rice is well versed in the effects of the beauty ideal on women. Current studies suggest that eight per cent of women in North America suffer from eating disorders. Yet the most compelling statistics for Rice are those that indicate the extent of the problem among the next generation of women. In one study of Canadian schoolgirls, 27 per cent of the participants reported eating disordered attitudes and behaviours. In another study, 60 per cent of girls in grades seven and eight were dieting to lose weight.

Rice is alarmed by these statistics. "I work as a therapist with women who are dealing with food, weight and body image problems, including body image problems," she says. "I see the effects of media images of beauty and messages from others, ranging from hidden problems—such as a woman feeling depressed, anxious, doubting herself, sometimes feeling sexually inhibited and feeling that she's not able to participate sexually because of how she feels about her body—to more acute manifestations, which can include eating disorders. But they can also include social isolation—women feeling like they don't want to leave their homes because of how they look—to even things like thoughts of and attempts at suicide."

Rice praises *Beyond Compare* for conveying a wider definition of

what is beautiful and acceptable and promoting healthier body images among women. Institutional changes, such as marketing decisions by companies and stricter anti-harassment policies in schools and workplaces, must happen in conjunction with personal changes to our attitudes about body image, she argues.

IN THE END, all the botox and dieting in the world won't make you look like the models and actresses prominent in today's popular culture, warns Booth. "Most people in their everyday lives, they pick up a magazine, read it cover to cover, without realizing that so much airbrushing and doctoring goes into every photo," she says. "People don't realize that so much can be done with photos and not everything is as it appears. It's basically a magic show."

"So I think when people see images and they're bombarded with images day after day—in order to be sexy, in order to be beautiful, in order to be desirable, and not just to be attractive to the opposite sex but to the world in general—[they're pressured] to measure up to these images that even the people in these images don't measure up to. It's a fantasy world that people don't realize really is fantasy." ●

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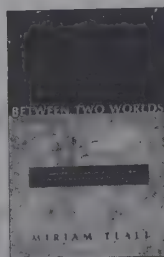
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School of rock

Two former Edmontonians study Music 101 at ground zero

By AMANDA FORTIER

NEW YORK CITY—Finding a suitable spot to conduct an interview in New York City is a hassle. Especially in winter. It's too damn cold to sit in the park and all the coffee shops are jam-packed. You can't really meet at someone's place, because who actually lives in a place that comfortably accommodates more than three people? Oh yes, there's also that little "to see" and "be seen" issue in the

Big Apple. It's just too entertaining to partake in the abundant people-watching and eavesdropping opportunities—even when your meeting is somewhat "business"-related.

After nearly three months of organizing and reorganizing schedules with Edmonton-born, New York-based musicians Terence Bernardo and Connie Petruk, who respectively play in bands called White Mud Free Way and the Loser's Lounge, I finally got the dirt I needed.

"New York is all about the scene," says Bernardo, White Mud Free Way's lead singer. We're sitting at venue number two in the string of

FEATURE

three ventures it took to conduct an interview with Bernardo and his bandmates Mari Solivan (vocals and guitar) and Conrad Choucroun (drums). We can hardly hear each

other as we try lip-reading across the table of Pilsner bottles and stale pretzels. The DJ has just cranked up the Pogues to a level beyond ear comfort, yet the howling wind impedes us from searching for a vacant spot outside the bar. As I pass the tape recorder back and forth between the crew, I secretly pray I'll hear something useful by night's end.

Okay, so who's heard of the actual Whitemud Freeway outside Alberta? I'm talking about the

stretch of pavement that cuts through the capital city, not the groovy pop band that plays the Mercury Lounge and other A-list clubs in New York City. Ask any of their quasi-casual-retro-punk listeners who approvingly tap their fingers and bob their heads in an effort to restrain dancing and they'll shake their heads. They don't know where the name comes from, and frankly

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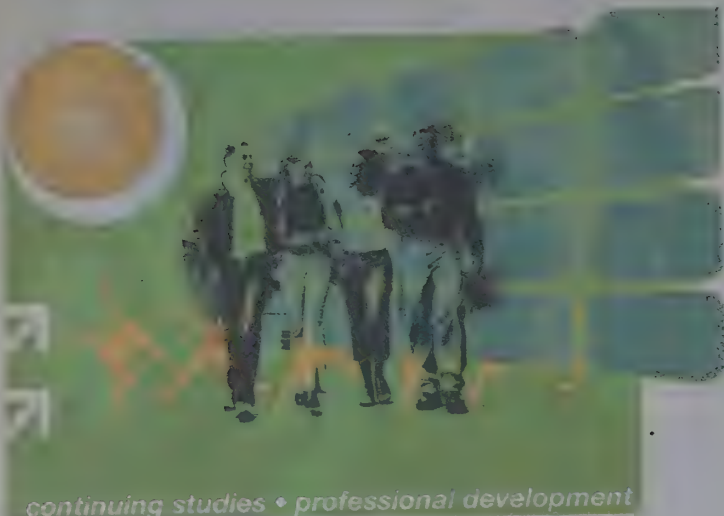
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Rock school

Continued from page 35

they don't care. It's catchy, fun, lighthearted music, so "what the hell does it matter," fans say. It's Canadiana trivia that sounds cool and looks good in writing, period.

When I first heard the uncomplicated, shimmering melodies of White

Mud Free Way, I was standing tippy-toed at the back of their mainstay venue, the Mercury Lounge on the Lower East Side. A neighbourhood now filled with more rich hipsters than heroin addicts, the Mercury Lounge has been WMFW's most regular giggin' ground since they began performing publicly back in June 2003. Standing among the handful of listeners who fit into the diminutive

and dark brick-covered space, I couldn't stop myself reminiscing about the band's cement eponym thousands of miles northwest.

IT'S A FITTING NAME for a group of musicians who originally came together to "see where they could go." When longtime friends Bernardo and Solivan, who originally stems from across the tunnel in New Jersey,

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Connie Petruk

left the dusty academia halls of McGill University, they were bound for the Big Apple. That was more than six years ago, and neither had concrete aspirations to join the hodgepodge, yo-yo world of music that colours NYC's subway stops, trendy clubs and suave lounges. They simply wanted to "follow the ride."

Sitting down with the members of WMFW is much like sitting sideline to a family gathering. Before we even get settled in the hallway of stop number one—a coffee shop in hipsterville Williamsburg, Brooklyn—Bernardo has made his third phone call to let us know he's on his way. "He's a block away now," announces Solivan, shaking her head. "He called to let us know he'll be here in 30 seconds."

After repeated attempts to begin the interview, Solivan finally takes pity and addresses one of my questions. "In the beginning," she recounts, "I never really thought there would be an audience for [our music].... We were just trying out any style we liked, trying to go for it, mix it up. This is a lot of how it came about."

AND COME ABOO!, ahem, it has. Over the last few months, the four-piece group—which also includes Choucroun's fellow Texan pal John Hill on bass—has managed to climb some relatively steep rungs on NYC's music ladder. Moving through the humdrum hoops is a requisite for bands breaking their way in this city. Literally "playing their way into town," WMFW worked their way in from the outer boroughs of New Jersey and Brooklyn. Now it's not uncommon to see their name listed among the masses in the music section of the *Village Voice*. Playing in downtown and midtown mainstay establishments like the Knitting Factory and

Luna Lounge, WMFW had their inaugural turn opening at this year's Country Music Journal festival—a requisite "more-hype-less-hoopla" gig many NYC-based bands must, somewhat unwillingly, plow through.

"There is nothing so stratified as [NYC] in Canada," says Bernardo, the student's union president at Edmonton's Archbishop MacDonald high school a decade or so ago. "New York is a good testing ground for marketability, but at the same time you can't really rely on that.... New York is completely distorted. Outside the city isn't necessarily the same reception you'd get inside. It's easy to get a cool or even cold response sometimes. It's all about the scene and being seen."

Well, if so, then pity the fools who've neglected to check out the band's first album, *Last Year's Junk*. Their eclectic beats come from an unusual and unique mix of influences, from Joni Mitchell to Eminem. The lyrics, collaborative efforts between Bernardo and Solivan, are lighthearted and tender, conjuring up images of cruising down a prairie highway, open skies and gleaming cornfields sweeping by in the rearview mirror. "Basically," Bernardo summarizes, "our music is a result of everything we like to listen to. We definitely love the Beatles and Paul McCartney, but we also listen to rap and electronica. I think our album is a sum of all our influences."

Bernardo is no stranger to the world of manipulated sounds. Although he was a film undergrad and once interned with Martin Scorsese's production company, he's now nearing completion of his Masters in music at NYU. "Initially, I had zero intentions of playing music here," he says. It was a friend, Canadian musical talent Kid Koala, who encouraged

him to experiment with the sounds that sent him on his musical way. Playing around with computer samples, toying with electronic noise and manipulating sound vibrations eventually triggered a lot of the harmonies WMFW uses to form the backbone of their musical aesthetic. "Now, though," Bernardo explains, "it's hard not to be influenced by other bands in New York City, even subconsciously. Here is where a lot of things start and make their mark."

A second WMFW album is in the works and Bernardo promises a lot of experimenting with sounds and textures, though they're still flushing out a handful of the songs in recording. The disc is expected sometime within the year on Bar/None Records, who will also be re-releasing *Last Year's Junk*.

THE NICE THING about meeting up with an Edmontonian in the Big Apple is the tacit bond that exists amongst those who know what the Butterdome is, have taken a stroll through the river valley in the fall or have experienced three straight weeks of -40°C weather. We've all had a beer at the Strat, indulged in a sticky bun from the Sugar Bowl or gathered in the high school gymnasium for Battle of the Bands and Wayne Lee's infamous hypnotist shows. Sitting down with Edmonton-born Connie Petruk, who has firmly established her singing career in New York City over the past 15 years, it feels like I've known her for much longer than a couple hour-long visits.

Petruck carries a captivating optimism in her voice, a product of having lived through the struggle of making ends meet in a city bubbling over with artistic talent. The O'Leary High School graduate first came to New York City 15 years ago. "I initially came down to visit a girlfriend and just ended up staying," she explains between sips of Earl Grey tea. We're seated at Café Mozart, a popular art café on the Upper West Side on a

frigid Saturday morning. "I actually always thought I'd end up in L.A.," Petruk continues. "It's kinda weird, though, because I lived such an elated life in Edmonton. It was kinda sheltered and I felt I needed to get some life experience and learn some stuff."

The road to becoming a professional musician and singer for Petruk—the daughter of Wallis Petruk of the Emeralds, the long-standing Edmonton show and dance band that invented the wedding favourite "Bird Dance"—hasn't been without its share of difficulties. "I moved back after the first year," she admits. "I went back to Edmonton to regroup, do some singing work in TV and radio, and study voice and piano at Grant MacEwan. Coming back to New York I had a better idea of what I was getting into."

IT DIDN'T TAKE much longer before Petruk got back in the saddle. She got various jobs co-writing for film and television, including *Jeffrey*, *Jawbreaker* and singing backup for David Bowie and Nile Rodgers. After spending a year accompanying a friend who was managing the Loser's Lounge, and after persistent phone calls to "lead Loser" Joe McGinty, Petruk finally got the offer she'd been patiently awaiting. That was six years ago.

"If you're outgoing and good at networking, New York is like anywhere," she says. "It took me a long time, because I am kinda shy and not really outgoing. I lost my confidence and was struggling so hard to make a living. I was pretty lucky though [because how it ended up]."

Luck may have gotten the ball rolling, but nowadays Petruk seems to have gathered a lot of her work and projects through persistence and dedication. After nearly two months of unsuccessful attempts to get a seat to see the Loser's Lounge, I finally managed to score a ticket to the normally sold-out events, but only thanks to Petruk herself. I was in for a treat. They were playing tribute to the dramatic repertoire of James

Bond and John Barry, an undeniable crowd-pleaser.

It's no surprise why this group of 20-odd musicians and singers draws such venue-filling crowds. They are a luminous bunch that has as much fun bustling about onstage as the grinning audience intently surveying their antics from the tables below. The crew's onstage pizzazz radiates an energy that emanates deep into

every nook and cranny. Fez, the dimly lit downtown basement locale where they normally hold their shows, is one of New York's favourite spots for live music and has showcased an assortment of celebrity figures from Cyndi Lauper and Moby to Carson Daly and Joan Rivers.

"It's just a lot of fun," Petruk bubbles between sets. "I mean, we all just have a really good time up

there." She needn't elaborate. I mean, where else but New York would you get to see a silhouetted naked man dancing onstage so unself-consciously to "Live and Let Die" before an overflowing room of elated onlookers?

The rest of the Losers come from

SEE PAGE 44

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EDUCATION

97

Welcome to the curriculum from hell

Why are so many high school students being asked to study "Hotel California"?

By SARA HAZLEWOOD

By the time their kids have reached high school, most parents have experienced their fair share of wacky school programs. I have personal recollections of the self-esteem era, the learning-through-osmosis craze and the "Let's scare the hell out of them" anti-drug death march spearheaded by Nancy Reagan in the United States. Yet even as a veteran of institutional goofiness, I was caught off-guard—floored, to be honest—when "Hotel California," the song by the Eagles, was the basis for an assignment in my kid's English class. Understand: this was not the craven act of one renegade teacher; this was the second time this had happened in two separate schools, with two separate teachers.

I'm still not sure how it happened; perhaps some misguided fan ended up working in the school superintendent's office. Can't blame it on the teachers—both of them are too young to know any better. And so I'm left shaking my head, wondering if other parents find this disturbing. I wonder if other parents worry that they could end up paying tuition for UCLA's film school only to discover that their kids are studying *The Brady Bunch* instead of *Citizen Kane*.

The first time this happened—"Hotel California" was assigned as part of a poetry unit in my daughter's junior high class—I went along with it. I consider myself open-minded. I figured there was more to the song than I originally remembered. But why, I asked myself, if they are going to deconstruct rock 'n' roll, couldn't they at least study Jim Morrison, who, although something of a degenerate, was at least a credible poet? And what the hell happened to Emily Dickinson? Are real poets suddenly devoid of academic charm or relevance?

Whatever. The class was asked to

research and write about the meaning of the song—a tall order for anyone, including the Eagles. My daughter genuinely tried to come up with an intelligent-sounding explanation. But there wasn't an answer per se; even the teacher offered no explanation at the end of the class discussion. Particularly perplexed were the kids who, because of language or taste issues, couldn't even ask their parents what it meant. Granted, most of us with passing knowledge of the Eagles were just as clueless, but we could, given our age and experience, at least offer drugs as the subtext.

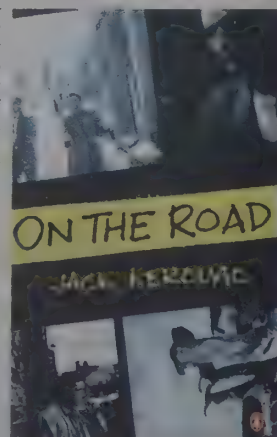
THEN IT HAPPENED AGAIN this year, this time at my son's high school. It was right after they read

EDUCATION

Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*, which is either the greatest contemporary

novel of all time or the inebriated ramblings of a genius who stayed true to himself by aimlessly driving around with a friend who neglected his children and used women as cheap entertainment. But I digress. This was deep into the unit on existentialism; I guess somewhere along the way they replaced Jean-Paul Sartre and Dostoevsky with Jack, Glenn and the Dons. I was still reeling from the fact that my son hadn't even heard of Sartre when the "Hotel California"

assignment came into his life.



Okay. I'll concede that the first couple lines of "Hotel California" are sort of nice. That "on a dark desert highway, cool wind in my hair" bit is quite poetic. But that's it. Things definitely start to deteriorate by the next line, which, if you will recall, talks about "the warm smell of colitas." You know, I'm still not certain what that word means. It's not in any dictionary,

unless they actually meant to say "colitis." But somehow I doubt Don Henley was driving on a dark desert highway smelling an inflamed colon. (Nancy Reagan and school officials everywhere would be pleased to know that one explanation is that the Eagles were told by their road manager that colitas means "little buds" in colloquial Spanish.)

Yes, I know, there are a number of possibilities. One popular take is that the song is a free-associative ramble on the trappings of success, drugs and southern California, but



I'm just not convinced. I even went as far as to check the Eagles' website to see if it contained any clues as to the meaning of the song. Although I couldn't find any comments by Henley (an admirable show of restraint), there was a pertinent interview with guitarist Glenn Frey. Here's what he said: "At the time we were also quite fond of Steely Dan and listening to a lot of their records. And one of the things that impressed us about Steely Dan was that they would say anything in their songs and it did not have to necessarily make sense."

So can we really discuss ennui, the nature of free will, the struggle of man to overcome threats to his individuality using a song that was an attempt to emulate nonsensical

Steely Dan lyrics? I think not.

And as for the parts that *do* make sense... well, let's face it—they're just not that profound. "I saw a shimmering light/My head grew heavy, and

my sight grew dim/I had to stop for the night." He was falling asleep while driving so he stopped for the night. Heavy. "I called up the Captain, please bring me my wine/He said we haven't had that spirit here since 1969." We all know that people had stopped drinking wine in the '70s and had switched to drinks like Brandy Alexanders, but is that worthy of inclusion? Is this English lit or Mixology 101?

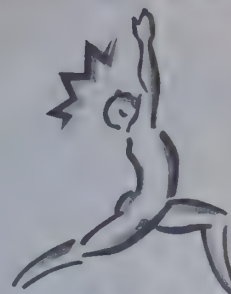
EVEN AS COMMENTARY on the life of a rock star, "Hotel California" is hardly eye-opening. The song could be about any number of contemporary performers: consider the part about the woman with a Tiffany-twisted mind dancing in a courtyard with a lot of pretty, pretty boys. Britney Spears and 'N Sync? Jessica Simpson and 98? Where's the analytical meat? The literary nuggets lodged between the lines?

Most peculiar of all is the strange

ending to the song and its bizarre sexual allusions. You have mirrors on the ceiling, pink champagne on ice and talk of being prisoners of our own device. The image is a typical post-adolescent male fantasy mixed with a cheap horror flick, complete with the sexist image of the enticing but evil temptress. All you need is Vincent Price saying the last lines: "You can check out any time you like, but you can never leave."

So here it is, the start of my son's senior year. They're kicking things off by studying existentialism—I swear to God—and I find myself wondering if they'll employ a team of child psychiatrists to mop up at the end of the semester. A quick look at the reading list brings some comfort, though: Kerouac again, but no "Hotel California" and—joy!—Sartre. He's right there at the bottom, just before the Doobie Brothers and right after Bachman Turner Overdrive. ☉

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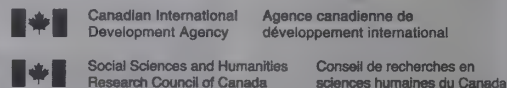
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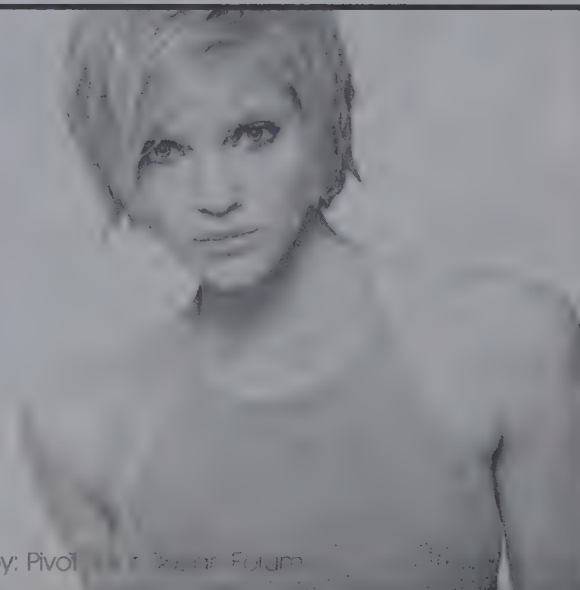


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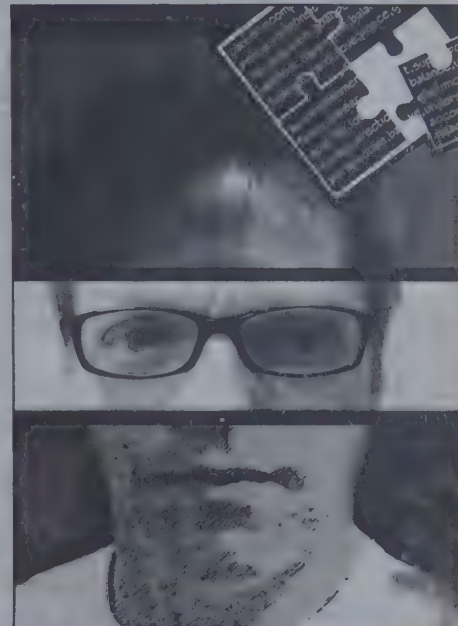
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EDUCATION

Rock school

Continued from page 39

a wide and varied background of talents and tales. Initially formed in 1993 by Joe McGinty, the band specializes in tribute music. Their tunes run the gamut from the Bee Gees to Elton John, Devo and Neil Diamond. Part improvisational performance and part rehearsed material, I find it incredible that they have only one practice session together before starting a new show. You'd never know it, though. The performers are cheering for each other offstage as much as the audience is eagerly applauding between scores. Any mishaps seem like creative additions.

DRESSED IN HER customary "Bond Girl" attire—minidress, knee-high stiletto boots and false eyelashes—Petruck was the only female vocalist among the 11 "Kustard Kings" to carry the commendable three-hour lineup of cover tunes. Strumming the guitar over her lap, shaking the tambourine atop a stool and singing a passionate version of "Nobody Does It Better," Petruck proved in every song why she's an integral part of the band.

"The one thing about New York," she says, "is that you're exposed to so much. You never know who's going to show up when you're there singing." American filmmaker J.C. Pennebaker took note of the ensem-

ble and decided a documentary was in order—one that would candidly capture aspects of their individual lives, rehearsals and performances. He's recently entered post-production with the footage and plans to release the documentary in time for next year's Toronto Film Festival.

This June, the Loser's Lounge will be Germany-bound; they'll be participating in the Bonn Music Festival, and Petruck is looking forward to the event. "I love European audiences," says Petruck, who's played in London, Switzerland and Germany in the past. "They are so receptive to new ideas, more civilized in general."

When she returns from overseas, Petruck will be thrust headlong into her New York work. Besides the Loser's Lounge, she's also a cast member in the Off-Broadway rock musical *People Are Wrong*, which will run throughout August and September. Still not enough? In her "free time," Petruck is working on her own projects. She and her boyfriend Chris, also a musician and songwriter, are currently putting together their own collaboration.

So it seems the two Edmontonians are holding their own in this bustling, über-competitive circus town. Maybe there was something to those afternoon Battle of the Bands gigs back home. ☉

Amanda Fortier, a former Edmontonian herself, is a retired Olympic cross-country skier now living in Brooklyn, New York.

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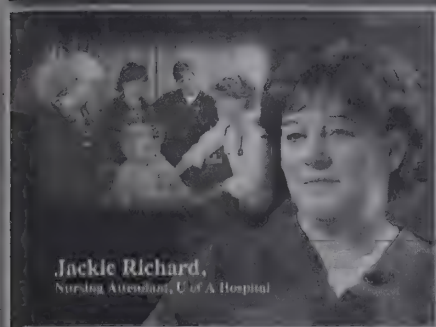
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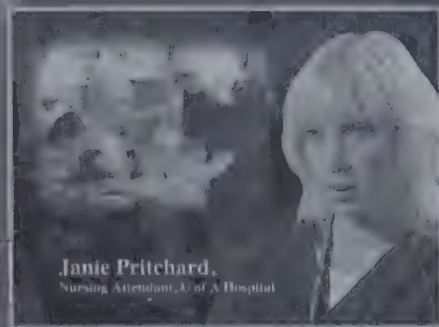
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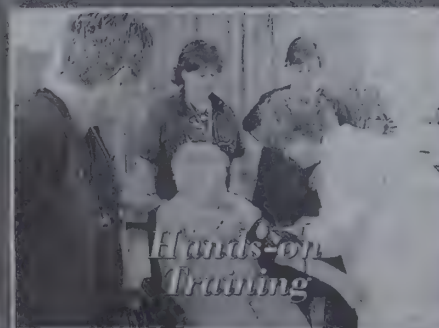
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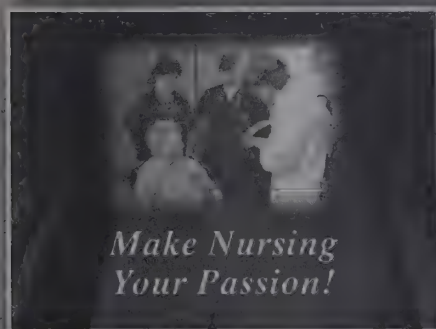
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street vision

By SEAN AUSTIN-JOYNER

Free samples

Jazz fans criticized rock 'n' roll. Rock 'n' roll fans criticized disco. Disco fans criticized '80s pop. But rap, which manages to combine the suggestiveness of rock, the soulless commercialization of disco and the electronic rhythms of pop, makes it the most irresistible target the creativity police have ever encountered. Not only has the very idea that rap could have artistic merit been scoffed at since day one, but the very nature of rap, what you could call its genetic code, has also been under scrutiny. The root of this condemnation? Sampling.

The first MCs rhymed over funk and disco breaks on street corners and basketball courts. Financial restraints (hip-hop is obviously the product of musicians with little to no income) meant that DJs didn't have access to technology like samplers. Instead, they'd juggle two copies of the same record back and forth to create instrumental loops. When the technology became affordable, those same DJs took to the studio and produced their own songs—often employing the same borrowed loops they'd always been using. Mainstream disapproval inevitably followed.

Brooklyn-based hip-hop group Stetsasonic said it best in "Talkin' All That Jazz." The song was written to counter a flurry of criticism from "music aficionados" and skeptical

artists like Mtume (who was sampled in one of the most memorable rap songs of all time, Notorious B.I.G.'s "Juicy") and make the case that hip-hop is an unoriginal art form. The group used specific historical examples to justify their position, dropping lines like "Tell the truth, James Brown was old/'Til Eric and Rakim came out with 'I Got Soul'/'Rap brings back old R&B/And if we would not, people could've forgot." Ironically, the pro-sampling group was backed by a live band.

At its best, the art (yes, *art*) of sampling creates mood and atmosphere for a song. It's a valuable reference to a previous era that shows

jazz and soul music took a mediocre MC, Will Smith, to the heights of pop culture. Even on their lesser tracks, DJ Jazzy Jeff and the Fresh Prince featured inventive samples—just listen to "I Wanna Rock" (sample taken from Lyn Collins's "Think") and "Who Stole My Car" (sample taken from the JB's "The Grunt").

The worst argument against sampling doesn't come from outside the hip-hop world, but from lazy artists like Shaquille O'Neal, whose 1994 song "Biological Didn't Bother" used an entire two-bar vocal sample from Pete Rock and CL Smooth's "T.R.O.Y.," which was recorded only a year and a half earlier; or Limp Bizkit, whose "My Way" used an utterly irrelevant but handy sample from Eric B and Rakim's "My Melody." I'm not even going to get into the musical rape P. Diddy has committed to artists like Diana Ross ("I'm Coming Out"), Herb Alpert ("Rise") and David Bowie ("Let's Dance").

But at least poor sampling makes us appreciate it the artists who do it right even more. So I'd like to thank producers like Pete Rock, Kanye West and Jay Dee for raising the creative bar. And may hacks like Jermaine Dupri, Dallas Austin and Mannie Fresh fall into the pit of obscurity—and take their Korg Triton keyboards along with them. ☺



similarities between generations. One of the most prolific samplers in the history of hip-hop has to be DJ Jazzy Jeff, whose in-depth knowledge of

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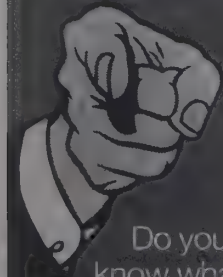
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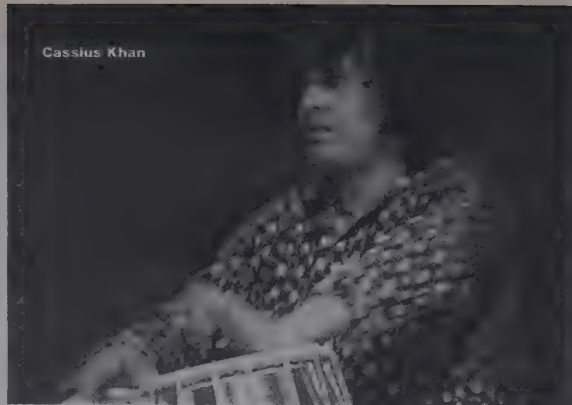
I, Cassius

Cassius Khan • With Amika Kushwaha and Meera Varghese • Stanley A. Milner Library Theatre • Fri, Mar 19 There are many reasons why local tabla player Cassius Khan's performances are so astounding, but perhaps the most notable one is that Khan plays the tabla while he sings, a feat many

accomplished musicians previously considered impossible. Khan, accompanied by harmonium players Amika Kushwaha and Meera Varghese, will complete a season-long series this weekend with *Ghazal: Images of the Heart*.

"[Ghazal is] a specific structure of poetry," Kushwaha says, "and this poetry can be recited or it can be sung. When it is sung with the Indian melodic structures and the feeling that comes with the Indian melodies, that's when it becomes the most powerful."

"There are standard melodies that relate to the poems," continues Varghese, "but in performance Cassius begins with the melody and then takes it to a completely new level because he improvises around that melody. Each one depicts a different mood, so depending on the mood, through his vocalization he'll depict whatever the emotion, the feeling of that poem is and that's what makes his performances so unique. It's his interpreta-



Cassius Khan

tion of the poem." Because of the spontaneous nature of Khan's work, both women consider the performances "musical conversations"—and no two are ever the same.

Although he's never been to India, Khan studied Urdu while attending

school in Fiji and both his musical teachers learned their skills in India and passed on their knowledge to their solo pupil of more than 20 years. "It's a very close relationship between the

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The George Bushes play unimpeachably rousing, politically incorrect folk music

By PHIL DUPERRON

A little humour goes a long way in these dark times. A reputation for a wild live show doesn't hurt, either. The George Bushes have both in spades and, with the release of their new album, *Handsome*, world domination can't be far off. But how did a group of unpolitical scenesters with a taste for high-energy folk music end up with such a politically charged name?

"We're all into humour and we love making people laugh," explains rhythm guitarist Melisa Stefaniw, "and the George Bushes just seemed so obscene and so ridiculous, because in our opinion he is a joke and he was a joke at that time. He still is. It was more a funny thing than anything else. We just thought, 'Oh gawd—it sounds bad, it looks bad when it's written and people hate to say it.' They don't want to tell their parents about it. My parents hate to say it, but it does the trick. We tried to change it and people were like, 'What are you doing?'"

When the Bushes began playing, Bill Clinton was still occupying the White House. Stefaniw and singer Erin Sullivan were in a teenage band while attending school together in rural Alberta. They played punk covers by the likes of Field Day, but eventually they went their separate ways. A few years later they rejoined forces in a short-lived rootsy three-piece called Magdalen. Then came a fateful meeting of musical minds at the North Country Fair.

"It was six in the morning," Stefaniw recalls, "and a pot of tea had been brewed and we started playing all these old tunes we had played three years prior and [banjo player Darcy Whiteside] started playing along and we were like, 'Oh, yeah. This has got to happen.' It was awesome. That's exactly how it came together. It was a bit of a fluke."

WHITESIDE ENDED UP being too busy with his other band, Maple Creek, to keep up with the Bushes' hectic schedule, but his banjo work appears on *Handsome* and he'll be strapping it on and plucking along with them for a few tunes to celebrate its release. Whiteside was replaced last year by electric guitarist Marc Jenkins, whose deft playing changed the band's sound from the brand of ultra-fast bluegrass they dubbed "coke-folk" to a more rambling, rollicking country flavour. The new lineup also includes upright bassist Steve McGonigle and drummer Brian Horwitz, but their live show is still the same boot-stomping, ass-shaking affair that created



such a buzz about the Bushes in the first place.

"When you go see a band live and you see them connect with an audience, even if it's not your type of music, it's undeniable," says Jenkins. "It moves you. You'd have

PREVIEW FOLK

to be a rock—like a stone—to not feel that, and that's what makes the difference."

But when they went down into the bowels of Riverdale Recorders to make *Handsome* with engineer/producer Scott Franchuk, it was time to settle down and let the songs speak for themselves. Instead of trying to recreate the energy of a Bushes live gig, they chose to focus instead on

the witty songwriting that sometimes gets lost behind the noise. "I'm pretty serious about lyrics," Stefaniw says. "It's a personal thing for me. I've been writing lyrics since I was a really young kid. Teen angst and binders full of shitty poems."

While her bandmates often chide her for writing morbid songs like "Funeral for a Girl" and "Killer in the Woods," gloomy subject matter is just part of Stefaniw's style. "When I'm happy I don't feel like singing," she says. "I feel like listening to stuff but I don't feel like singing about it. I have to be pissed off or really in the dumps and I like it. That's my fuel, for sure." ☉

THE GEORGE BUSHES

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WILFRED N. & THE GROWN MEN CD RELEASE

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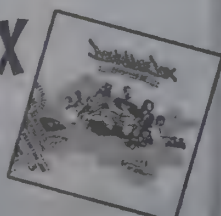
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FOR THE WEEK ENDING MAR 19, 2004

1. Franz Ferdinand - Franz Ferdinand (domino)
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3. The Von Bondies - Pawn Shoppe Heart (sire)
4. The Flatlanders - Wheels Of Fortune (new west)
5. Corb Lund Band - Modern Pain (corb lund)
6. The Casualties - On The Front Line (sideonedummy)
7. Joel Kroeker - Melodrama (true north)
8. No Depression - What It Sounds Like Vol.1 (dualtone)
9. TV On The Radio - Desperate Youth, Blood Thirsty Babies (touch & go)
10. Mae Moore & Lester Quiltzau - Oh My! (plant & garden)
11. Destroyer - Your Blues (merge)
12. Livin' Lovin' Losin' - Songs Of The Louvin Brothers (universal)
13. Eric Bibb, Rory Block & Maria Muldaur - Sisters & Brothers (telarc)
14. Horrorpops - Hell Yeah! (hellcat)
15. Air - Talkie Walkie (emj)
16. Falconhawk - Hotmouth (saved by radio)
17. The Get Up Kids - Guilt Show (vagrant)
18. Keb' Mo' - Keep It Simple (okeh)
19. James Keelaghan - Then Again (jericho beach)
20. The Network - Money Money 2020 (adeline)
21. For You - Tribute To Compromise (united edge)
22. Johnny Cash - The Man Comes Around (american)
23. Xiu Xiu - Fabulous Muscles (5rc)
24. Martyn Joseph - Whoever It Was That Brought Me... (jericho beach)
25. Lhasa - The Living Room (select)
26. The Floor - Autonomy Off/On (the floor)
27. Paul Kelly - Ways & Means (true north)
28. Robert Randolph - Unclassified (darecords)
29. The Dixie Hummingbirds - Diamond Jubilation (rounder)
30. Al Green - Cant Stop (blue note)

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THU LIVE MUSIC

A STARS Upper Room: Resistance, Ender, At Arms Length, Palestorm; 9pm (door)
ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL Tim and John
BLUES ON WHYTE Madcaps (R&B/blues)
CASINO YELLOWHEAD Catalyst (Caribbean/reggae)
CHANCE RESTAURANT Andrew Glover Trio; 4-7pm
COKE COUNTRY SALOON Battle of the Bands; 9pm; no cover
DUSTER'S PUB Jam hosted by Brian Petch
FOUR ROOMS (DOWNTOWN) Bobby Cairns
JFS Open stage with cover band
KINGSNIGHT PUB X-Engine-X, Blind and Tom
NAKED CYBER CAFE Open stage
BATTLEGROUND SALOON Lisa Hewitt

RECALL PLACE Nickelback, Default, Thymie, 6pm (door), 7pm (show); \$12-\$20 and \$42-\$50; tickets available at TicketMaster 451-8000
SHERLOCK HOLMES (DOWNTOWN) Tim Becker
SHERLOCK HOLMES (CAPILANO) Dave Hebert
SHERLOCK HOLMES (VIRAM) Jimmy Whiffen
SIDETRACK CAFE Paul Kelly and the Boom Companions; Joel Kroeker; 9pm; \$14 (adv)/\$16 (door); tickets available at TicketMaster 451-8000
SUGARBOWL Roger Dean Young and the Tin Cup, That Kelly Boy; 9-10; \$5

CLASSICAL
EDMONTON UNITED CHORUS Edmonton Chorus; tickets available at door; 903-8256
DJS
THE ARMOURY To Ball Night; top 40
BILLY BOB'S LOUNGE Big Mouth Entertainment
BLACK DOG FREEHOUSE Thump; in-tronica with the DDK Soundystem
DEEPART AND CASTLE ON WHYTE Sleeman Method Thursday; hip hop, downtempo with DJ Headspin
ESCAPE ULTRA LOUNGE Ferry Corten, Lisa Lathier, Kid Vicous, Azim; no minors event; \$25; tickets available at TicketMaster 451-8000
FILTHY MACHISTY'S Punk Rock Binge; with DJ S.W.A.G.
GAS PUMP Ladies Night; top 40/dance with DJ Christian
GUILTY MARTINE NORTH Groove Party
GUILTY MARTINE SOUTH Groove Party
JOINT Busta Rhymes, Bitchop, Kyprios; no minors event; 7pm (door); \$28 (adv); tickets available at TicketMaster 451-8000, Footy, Underground, Colourblind, door
LONGGRASSERS Last Night's; free dance lessons 8-9:30pm
NEW CITY SOUND LOUNGE A-Dub Thursday; rocksteady, dub reggae with DJ Jerbus and the

Operation Redication Sound System
NEW CITY SUBURBS Progress; electro/new wave with DJ Miss Mannered and guests
RATTLESHAKE SALOON DJ Butte
RENEVOUS Metal Night; with DJ McNasty
THE ROOST Rotating shows: Ladonna's Review, Slidy's open stage and the Weakest Link game with DJ Jazzy second and last Thursday; \$1 (members)/\$4 (non-member)
RUM Urban Substance, Urban with Invinible, Spinyoke, Echo, Shortround, MC J-Money
SAVOY Funk w/ Bob Trampoline and Ben
SEEDY'S DJ Thursday
SHED Urban Substance Thursday: House with Nestor Delano, Tipwitsch
SHUTTER LUNAR Larian Substance; hip hop/R&B and of exams jam with Spinyoke, Invinible, J-Money, Sean B
YOUR APARTMENT Thursday Night Shake Down: Motown, northern soul, funk, 60s pop with Djs Triyad and Alex Zwoif

CLASSICAL
ALL SAINTS ANGLICAN CATHEDRAL An Evening of Song: Piano Plus Series Hugo Wolf featuring Jeremy Spurgeon (piano) Iren Bartok (soprano), Beth Raycroft (mezzo soprano), Ron Long (bass); 8pm; \$10 (adv)/\$5 (student/senior); tickets available at TIX on the Square 420-1757
TANLEY & MILNER LIBRARY Theatre: Indian Classical Music featuring Cassius Khary; 7pm; tickets available at door, 439-0253
WINSPEAR CENTRE Music of Judy Garland: The Robbins Pops Series featuring Lorna Luft, presented by the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra; 8pm; tickets start at \$25 (student/senior discounts available); tickets available at Winspear box office 428-1108

CLASSICAL
ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL Breakfast Boogie Band
CASINO (EDMONTON) Room to Dance (country/pop/rock)
CASINO (YELLOWHEAD) Catalyst (Caribbean/reggae)
CHANCE RESTAURANT Andrew Glover Trio; 4-7pm
FOYFYZ Patsy Annand and Brian Gregg
FESTIVAL PLACE Piper's Night (All-Canadian Canadian Experience) Featuring the RCMP Pipes and Drums of Strathcona County, Mana Dunn, Alex MacIntyre, Laura Vinson and Free Spirit, Dale Ladouceur, Colin MacLean (narrator); 7:30pm, \$24 (cabaret)/\$21 (theatre seating); tickets available at Festival Place box office 449-3378, TicketMaster 451-8000
FOUR ROOMS (DOWNTOWN) Harley Symington
LA GLOBE Brian Simm
GUILTY MARTINE Latin Fridays
HIGHRUM River City Omurds
J&S River City Rock (rock)
WHYTE ANTHEM PUB Headbangers; 9-10:30; no cover
KINGSNIGHT PUB SIN
LEAF'S HEAD PUB Rockabilly
LEGENDS PUB The Great Escape
LONGGRASSERS America Road; 7pm (door); \$4 (after 9pm); tickets available at the door
MICHAEL'S PUB AND GRILL The Shuffleboard; 9:30pm-1:30am; no cover
NEW CITY SOUND LOUNGE and X is (CD release party), Mark Birtles Project, Twin Fangs
LA P'TITE SCENE Open stage; 8pm-3am
PEPPERS #81
THE PUB The Rat Pak
QUEEN ALEXANDRA HALL Busker Ball: Doug Hill, Bill Gilday, Glenn Ellis, Michel Payant, Sandy McCubbin, The McLean Bros, Bill and Conrad MacIntyre; 7pm (door), 8pm (show); \$5
RATTLESHAKE SALOON Lisa Hewitt
RED'S KOAN, The Pilot Effect; no

minors event; 8pm (door), 10pm (show); free (before 8pm)/\$4 (after 8pm)
ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL Mike Stack, Ino/Joanne Myrtil presented by the Full Moon Folk Club; \$14 (adv)/\$16 (door)/children under 17 half price (at door only); tickets available at TIX on the Square 420-1757, Southside Sound
SEEDY'S One Drop, Mayor McCa
SHERLOCK HOLMES (DOWNTOWN) Tim Becker
SHERLOCK HOLMES (CAPILANO) Dave Hebert
SHERLOCK HOLMES (WHYTE) Jimmy Whiffen
SHERLOCK HOLMES (VIRAM) Boom Boom Kings
SIDETRACK CAFE The George Bushes (CD release party), Robin Hunter and the Six Foot Bullies; 9pm; \$10 (door)
URBAN LOUNGE Cruddy; \$5
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A STARS Upper Room: Way Macneque, Hille, Me, Plover, Main Room: Villan, Dusty, Johnny; 9pm (door)
ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL Acoustical
BLUES ON WHYTE The Big Breakfast Boogie Band
CASINO (EDMONTON) Room to Dance (country/pop/rock)
CASINO (YELLOWHEAD) Catalyst (Caribbean/reggae)
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SHERLOCK HOLMES (DOWNTOWN) Tim Becker
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SIDETRACK CAFE The George Bushes (CD release party), Robin Hunter and the Six Foot Bullies; 9pm; \$10 (door)
URBAN LOUNGE Cruddy; \$5
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SAT LIVE MUSIC

A STARS Upper Room: Way Macneque, Hille, Me, Plover, Main Room: Villan, Dusty, Johnny; 9pm (door)
ATLANTIC TRAP AND GILL Acoustical
BLUES ON WHYTE The Big Breakfast Boogie Band
CASINO (EDMONTON) Room to Dance (country/pop/rock)
CASINO (YELLOWHEAD) Catalyst (Caribbean/reggae)
CHANCE RESTAURANT Andrew Glover Trio; 4-7pm
FOYFYZ Patsy Annand and Brian Gregg
FESTIVAL PLACE Piper's Night (All-Canadian Canadian Experience) Featuring the RCMP Pipes and Drums of Strathcona County, Mana Dunn, Alex MacIntyre, Laura Vinson and Free Spirit, Dale Ladouceur, Colin MacLean (narrator); 7:30pm, \$24 (cabaret)/\$21 (theatre seating); tickets available at Festival Place box office 449-3378, TicketMaster 451-8000
FOUR ROOMS (DOWNTOWN) Harley Symington
LA GLOBE Brian Simm
GUILTY MARTINE Latin Fridays
HIGHRUM River City Omurds
J&S River City Rock (rock)
WHYTE ANTHEM PUB Headbangers; 9-10:30; no cover
KINGSNIGHT PUB SIN
LEAF'S HEAD PUB Rockabilly
LEGENDS PUB The Great Escape
LONGGRASSERS America Road; 7pm (door); \$4 (after 9pm); tickets available at the door
MICHAEL'S PUB AND GRILL The Shuffleboard; 9:30pm-1:30am; no cover
NEW CITY SOUND LOUNGE and X is (CD release party), Mark Birtles Project, Twin Fangs
LA P'TITE SCENE Open stage; 8pm-3am
PEPPERS #81
THE PUB The Rat Pak
QUEEN ALEXANDRA HALL Busker Ball: Doug Hill, Bill Gilday, Glenn Ellis, Michel Payant, Sandy McCubbin, The McLean Bros, Bill and Conrad MacIntyre; 7pm (door), 8pm (show); \$5
RATTLESHAKE SALOON Lisa Hewitt
RED'S KOAN, The Pilot Effect; no

minors event; 8pm (door), 10pm (show); free (before 8pm)/\$4 (after 8pm)
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MANHATTAN CLUB

Sinful
Lounge, top 40/dance

NEWCASTLE PUB AND GRILL

Shawn 7

NEW CITY SUBURBS

Saturdays
U.C.C. punk/alt/pop/dance with
blue jay and Harefoyle

ORLANDO'S PUNK AND GRILL

Musical with DJ Will Hill, 9pm

BATTLESHIP SALOON

DJ Butter

THE ROOST

Upstairs: Monthly
theme parties with DJ Jazzy. New
music with DJ Dan and Mike.

DOWNSTAIRS

Retro music, \$4
(member)/\$6 (non-member)

ROXY ON WHITE

Session
Saturday: dance/R&B, hip hop with
DJ Extreme

SAVOY

Deep house with Winston
Fleming

STARS NIGHTCLUB

Main Floor:
Live Metal Night: with Brian

STONEHOUSE PUB

Top 40 with
DJ 157

TONIC AFTER DARK

Uncensored
Jazzy: R&B, hip hop, old school
with Urban Metropolis Sound
Crew, all ages event, 8pm-midnight

Y AFTERHOURS

Mayhem
Saturdays with Anthony Donohu,
Vic Monson, Ryan Wade,
Ebonian, Jacy, D-Man

YOUR APARTMENT

Nordic
Foundations: DJ Dennis Zaz and
Karman Powers

SUN

LIVE MUSIC

BLUES ON WHITE

King Mustafa

CAFE LA GARE

Non-Song Cafe:
soulful Dance, Melissa Mabeau
and Ben Spencer, 8-11pm, no
cover

FATBOYZ

Open jam session
hosted by Imaginary Friend (blues,
rock), 7-11pm

JASON L. HARRIS

Percussion concert, 7:30pm, \$5
(adult)/\$3 (student/senior); tickets
available by phone at 497-4436

O'BRYNE'S

Joe Bird's live jam,
9-10pm

SIDETRACK CAFE

Under the
jaws: Sundays, Mustard Smile, DJ
Dudeman, 9pm, \$6

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Convocation Hall Concert Series
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Gullafume Tard (violin),
Jacques Després (piano); 8pm, \$15
(adult)/\$10 (student/senior); tickets
available at TIX on the Square 420-
1757, door, the Department of
Music at U of A 492-0601

MICHAEL WINTER

Concert-Hear My Prayer-
featuring Christine Leung (soprano);
2pm, 428-1818

BARFORTH STREET UNITED

CHURCH: Stabat Mater Presented
by the Alberta Baroque Ensemble
featuring Rosemarie van der Horst
(mezzo soprano); 3pm, \$22
(adult)/\$17 (senior/student); tickets
available at TIX on the Square 420-
1757

ST ANDREW'S UNITED CHURCH

Baroque Concert: Presented by the
Edmonton Baroque Orchestra,
with the Edmonton Renaissance
Singers, Donna Mae Island (percus-
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E.D. Blodgett (narrator);
3pm, \$12 (adult)/\$8 (senior/student);
tickets available at the door,
432-3311/455-0318

SELECT

Thomas Mead (alto), 5:30-
9pm

DJS

SAVOY NIGHTCLUB: Urban
Night: urban with DJ Inconceivable

DECADENCE

Worship Sundays
mixed with Big Daddy, DTR and
guests; 10am-close

MANHATTAN CLUB

Industry
Sundays: top 40, dance/R&B

NEW CITY LIKED LOUNGE

Atmosphere: funk, rare groove, hip
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THE ROOST

Betty Ford Hangover
Clinic: Show Beer Bath: every long
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French Pop, mixed with
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SATURDAY APRIL 10

NEW VENUE!

TICKETS PURCHASED FOR THE STARLITE ROOM SHOW WILL BE HONoured AT THE DOOR

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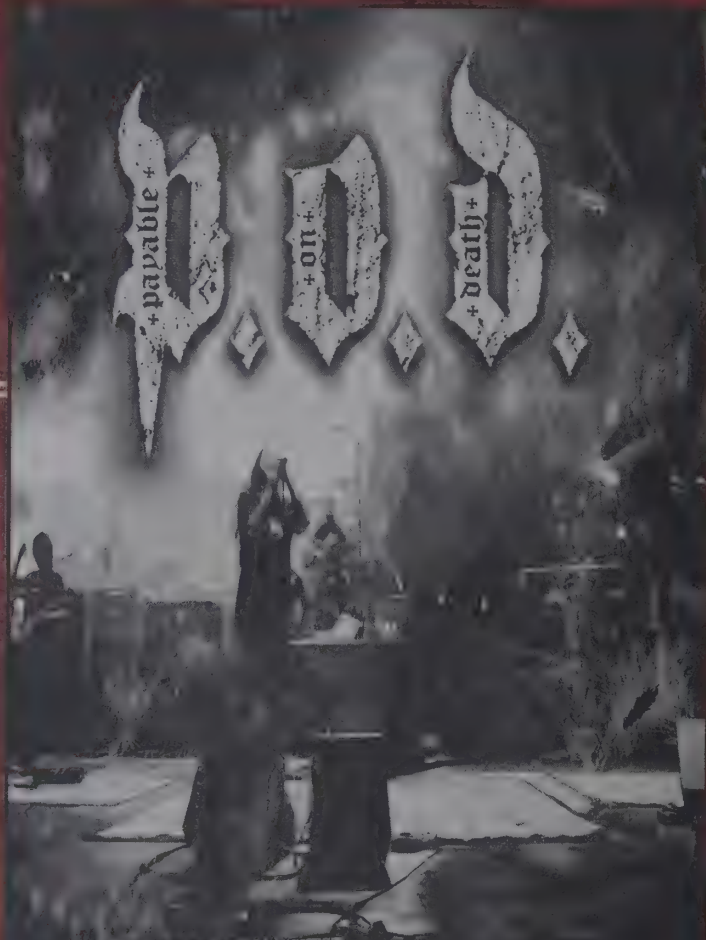
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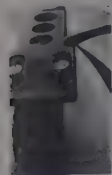
WITH SPECIAL GUEST

HAZEN ST.

LACUNA COIL

JUNE 9
RED'S

Flammar & Co. 100.3 fm
BEAR



By DAVID STONE

A Ferry special episode

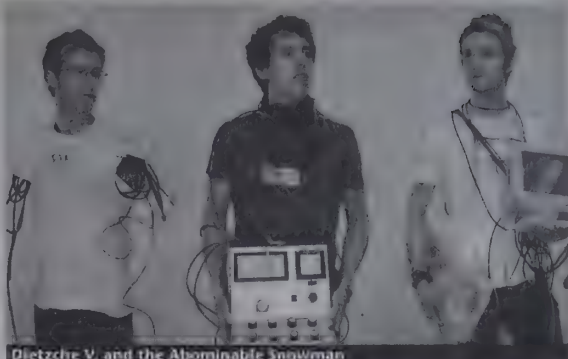
Ferry Corsten • With Lisa Lashes, Kid Vicious and Azim • Escape Ultra Lounge • Thu, Mar 18 Popularity is relative, figures Ferry Corsten. With the global clubbing community going nuts over the sound of Dutch trance as exported by the likes of Corsten, Tiësto and Armin Van Buuren, it might be easy to slip into a factory mentality and churn out what's popular, thus staying on the top of the list.

But Corsten hasn't been content to churn out track after track of the same rolling basslines and euphoric synth riffs as everyone else. Under his various guises—System F, Gouryella (with Tiësto) and Veracocha—Corsten helped pioneer that sound since the late 1990s, and he's not interested in falling back into the pack now.

In 2002, Corsten injected trance with a new energy when he released the appropriately titled "Punk" single. Driven by an overwhelming electro fanfare, the single was unlike anything else around and set him on the creative arc that led to his third artist album, *Right of Way*. Like most genius moments, "Punk" came as a complete accident.

"It was just one of those days where you put your hands down on the keyboard, and that's what came out," he explains. "I knew right then that this was something different—it wasn't trance or whatever name you want to give it. I thought, 'Maybe this is the one,' because I really didn't want to put out the usual trance record."

Although Corsten had been DJing and remixing under his given name, "Punk" was his official proclamation. "I'm ready to move onto something



Dietzche V. and the Abominable Snowman

else," he says. "I mean, [Right of Way] has its trance moments, but I'm starting to experiment with the electro sound more. 'Rock Your Body, Rock' [the album's first single] is really out there. I just feel that I ought to be more outstanding."

Keeping company with crowd-pleasing kingpins like Tiësto and Van Buuren doesn't intimidate Corsten or make him wonder whether his popularity will be overshadowed. "It means something to me to see myself ranked up high on [DJ magazine's Top 100 list], but I have a few question marks about the whole thing," he muses. "Trance might be the dominant sound right now, so it's going to have the most fans and therefore the most votes. Being on the top doesn't make me a better DJ than someone like Carl Cox—he plays [techno]. It's like comparing fish to meat. But I can't complain either."

Tickets for tonight's (Thursday) all-star show are selling faster than fast, so grab them at Ticketmaster, Foosh, Underground, Colourblind and Sunkissed Tanning while you can.

Binge and Merge

Merge the Strengths • With Dietzche V. and the Abominable Snowman, Bolide, Set Transition and DJ David Stone • Halo Nightclub (10538 Jasper Ave) • Fri, Mar 19 These days it feels as though you can throw a stone and hit a DJ, but

there seems to be a lack of people in Edmonton actively making electronic music and putting it on a stage. It's been a while since Sync and Lady J took their dynamic drum 'n' bass performances into the sunset, and Sneak Thief eventually decided that Berlin was a better locale for his glitchy techno. We've got plenty of great producers slowly gaining international notice—Scott Cartridge, Scott McFayden, Rolodex and Kristoff, to name a few—but where's the next Underworld?

Dietzche V and the Abominable Snowman might be the ticket. They emerged on the scene last year as Ramjet, influenced by Jeff Mills, Kraftwerk and—inexplicably—Steely Dan, and took on the new moniker when they opened for the Floor at New City last November. Since then, the trio has buzzed around the city's underground rock scene, proving to indie kids that grooving to electronic music isn't just for tweaked-out ravers. Their five-track EP, *Business + Pleasure*, is a superb taste of their fist-pumping tech-house revelry, and their live show is always an event.

Merge the Strengths is a one-off DIY event at Halo, with DVAS teaming up with fellow electro-musicians Bolide and Set Transition, with yours truly on the decks. It's an exciting thing to be a part of, and it's dirt cheap, too. Tickets are \$5 in advance at Listen and Blackbyrd and \$7 at the door. We're rocking until they kick us out. ☉

musician who plays in front of thousands of people a year would consider himself a shy person. But Mike Stack, who's played in bands that have opened for the Tragically Hip, the Georgia Satellites and Blue Rodeo, blames his own lack of self-confidence for his late-blooming career.

"I was too shy when I was back in the Maritimes," Stack explains over the phone from Calgary. "I was just way too 'I can't do that because I'll be labelled by my tough hockey buddies as a sissy.' And that's what it's like when you're a teenager and I didn't have the guts back then to go, 'No—I'm going to do this.' I was just too shy." Instead, Stack pursued a career in outdoor education and bought his first guitar while working at an outdoor education camp in the mountains with several other musicians.

"I knew I was going to be a guitar player forever in my life as soon as I started playing," Stack says. "I'm not by any means a virtuoso guitar player; I'm a three-chord melody guy. I finger-

pick a little, but I strum. It's just the feeling of the guitar in my hands that is very... It's a part of me, y'know, it really is. It fits—it's sort of like a piece of my anatomical puzzle."

After nearly two decades of playing with and fronting various bands, Stack has come full circle, performing his own songs in small songwriter venues, either solo or with Steve Pineo and Kit Johnson as the Mike Stack Trio. "From the day I bought my first guitar to today," he says, "I've always done that—sit on a stool and sing songs in cafés. Even when I was in the Burners and the Grift, I still would go out on the weekends once in a while when I had some downtime." After a short hiatus back home in Nova Scotia, Stack returned to a vibrant acoustic scene in Calgary, inspiring him to carry on with his own music. His solo debut, *I Need Wheels*, was released in November 2001 and since then he's been on the road primarily south of the border, most recently opening for Corb Lund last fall. ☉

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VUEWEEKLY

Root Down

Continued from page 48

teacher and student," Varghese says, "so that's how he's become so well versed in what he does."

Khan's performance this Friday carries additional significance because of the sudden death of his vocal teacher Mushtari Begum last weekend. Calling from Vancouver, he expressed enormous grief over the loss and will dedicate not only Friday's concert to her, but also the double album he's currently recording. With a busy summer season playing and touring with other artists, work on the disc has been delayed; no release date has yet been set.

Stack of all trades

Mike Stack • With Joanne Myrol • Full Moon Folk Club (St. Basil's Cultural Centre) • Fri, Mar 19 It's hard to imagine that a professional



top 10 cd's

- 1) JONES, NORAH
FEELS LIKE HOME
- 2) BLACK EYED PEAS
ELEPHUNK
- 3) EVANESCENCE
FALLEN
- 4) GROBAN, JOSH
CLOSER
- 5) CROW, SHERYL
VERY BEST OF
- 6) DIDO
LIFE FOR RENT
- 7) GREAT BIG SEA
SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL
- 8) OUTKAST
SPEAKERBOX /
THE LOVE BELOW
- 9) DARKNESS
PERMISSION TO LAND
- 10) NO DOUBT
SINGLES 1992-2003

top 10 dvds

- 1) SCHINDLER'S LIST
(Widescreen)
- 2) FUTURAMA VOLUME 3
(4 DVD's)
- 3) SCHOOL OF ROCK
(Widescreen)
- 4) MONA LISA SMILE
- 5) DAWN OF THE DEAD
(SINGLE)
- 6) TEN COMMANDMENTS:
Special Edition (2 DVD)
- 7) LOST IN
TRANSLATION
(Widescreen)
- 8) LION KING 1 1/2
(DVD)
- 9) FINDING NEMO (DVD)
- 10) PIRATES OF THE
CARIBBEAN (2VDS)

NEW SOUNDS

FRANZ FERDINAND
FRANZ FERDINAND
(DOMINO/OUTSIDE)

It's pretty obvious from the opening track, "Jacqueline," that the boys in Glasgow's Franz Ferdinand are interested in having a good time. For all of their clever retro stylings and arty pretensions, the bottom dollar with this self-titled debut is getting down with yo' bad self. Check out that bass thump and surging groove—this isn't about nodding your fancy haircut or considering the complexity of modernism. "Take Me Out" cuts loose from the first note, then transforms into a mutant disco stomper, but the album's centrepiece has to be "Michael," a Bowie-esque paean to "a beautiful dance whore" that clicks and pops with seedy, lecherous delight—like the rest of the record, it's sexy and smart at the same time. Sadly, people seem to want to compare Franz Ferdinand to the Strokes, but there's no contest—those New York gadabouts sound positively stiff and lifeless next to these inspired, groovy Scotsmen. ★★★★★ —DAVE JOHNSTON

THE BAD PLUS
GIVE
(COLUMBIA)

It's only halfway through the sixth track on jazz trio the Bad Plus's new album *Give* that you think, "What is this song? I know this song!" And then it hits you: "Wait a second: is this 'Velouria'? What the hell is a jazz combo doing covering the Pixies?" The Bad Plus are hardly the

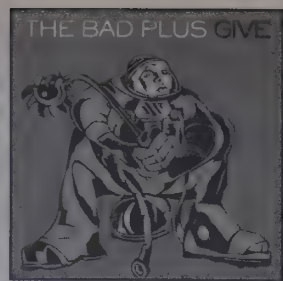


first jazz musicians to make rock songs part of their repertoire—Cassandra Wilson has recorded several memorable renditions of tracks made famous by the likes of Van Morrison and the Band, and jazz pianists have turned the art of covering Radiohead and Nirvana into a miniature industry. But few bands blend the delicate melodic invention of jazz with the sheer rockiness of the Pixies and Black Sabbath (whose "Iron Man" brings the album to a raucous conclusion) as naturally as the Bad Plus do.

They're far from a novelty band, though: eight of the album's 11 tracks are originals, with songwriting duties pretty much evenly split between pianist Ethan Iverson, bassist Reid Anderson and drummer David King. (A jumpy version of Ornette Coleman's "Street Woman" is the disc's other cover tune.) My favourite of these compositions is probably Anderson's confident "Dirty Blonde," but the award for best title definitely belongs to Iverson's "Cheney Piñata." At a time when seemingly every other jazz album is yet another tribute to Miles, Monk or Ellington, the Bad Plus are a breath of fresh air—can a cover of "Ace of Spades" be far away? ★★ —PAUL MATWYCHUK

NELLIE MCKAY
GET AWAY FROM ME
(COLUMBIA)

W magazine described much-hyped newcomer Nellie McKay as "a cross between Doris Day and Eminem," and in a remarkable display of lazy rock-critic groupthink, just about everybody who's written about her ever since



(including *Entertainment Weekly*, the *National Post*, *USA Today* and National Public Radio) has felt compelled to repeat W's line—and frequently claim it as their own invention. Fact is, Doris Day had a warm but powerful voice that leaves McKay's thin pop-jazz warbling in the dust. And as for the Eminem comparison, McKay's amateurish attempts at playing MC barely even qualify as rap—they're more like the theme song from *The Nanny*.

Give McKay credit for ambition: I don't know how she convinced a major label like Columbia to let her release her debut disc as an attention-must-be-paid double-CD set. There's a pleasantly off-beat, experimental sensibility at work on *Get Away From Me*—one moment she's jauntily mourning her dead kitten on "Ding Dong," the next she's singing about a different kind of pussy on the lustily funky "Baby Watch Your Back"—but at this point in her career, ambition is about all McKay has going for her. McKay's lyrics are precious instead of provocative (these are ditties, not songs) and while she performs in an impressive range of musical styles, she comes off as a callow dabbler. She's still only 19, so there's still plenty of time for the piano-playing McKay to blossom into the next Tori Amos, but right now she's still stuck in her *Y Can't I Read?* stage. ★★ —PAUL MATWYCHUK



scape, revealing what's happening in popular—and unpopular—culture, politics and society; what's happening on the farm and in the city; what's happening to the earth and to the people in it. The music is usually a complementary mixture of genres with melodies and instruments that traipse all over the musical spectrum. *All That We Let In*, the 'Go Girls' ninth studio recording, follows that tradition with a roster of songs which are tender, playful and earnest and which continue the vibe laid down in 2002's *Become You*.

While I certainly dig the disc—especially the rollicking opener "Fill it Up," the ska-tinged "Heartache For Everyone," the hard-edged "Tether" and the cheeky, hook-laden "Dairy Queen"—it's hard to ignore the fact that Emily Saliers and Amy Ray are repeating themselves a bit musically and thematically. Not that more of the same isn't great, if that's what you're after. But I was hoping for the strength and creativity of 1997's *Shaming of the Sun* or 1999's *Come on Now Social* (which I consider the most sophisticated and engaging release of their 15-year career). Nonetheless, it's a solid collection. ★★ —LISA GREGOIRE

LYOYD COLE
MUSIC IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE
(ONE LITTLE INDIAN)

There's no better way to find out what a rock star is really made of than to watch them approach middle age. How did Sting turn from a sexy-cool New Wave heartthrob into that pompous, hurdygurdy-cranking Disney

INDIGO GIRLS
ALL THAT WE LET IN
(EPIC)

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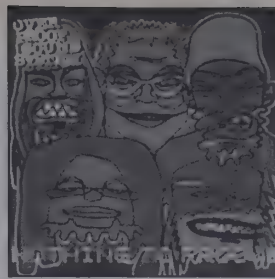
Franz Ferdinand

indigo girls

ALL THAT WE LET IN

top 10 sellers

01. fabulous muscles xiu xiu	08. st franz ferdinand
02. bows & arrows walkman	07. they were wrong, so we drowned flares
03. your blues destroyer	06. seven swans sullen swans
04. panda park 90 day men	09. ten clouded
05. desperate youth... tv on the radio	10. milk man deerhoof



songwriter who put everyone to sleep at the Oscars? When did Rod Stewart decide that he wanted to be the next Michael Feinstein? And what does Elvis Costello possibly see in Diana Krall?

Lloyd Cole belongs to roughly the same generation of angry, articulate young rockers as Sting and Costello, and while he might have not achieved their level of midlife chart success, I'd say he's aged more gracefully than either of them. His new disc, *Music in a Foreign Language*, is a model of mature songwriting—where someone like Sting will write comforting, boomer-friendly songs about true love, Cole is more interested in exploring the much more complicated terrain of adult relationships. Cole's not an acid-tongued cynic like Costello, either. He knows that kneejerk cynicism can be its own form of dishonesty—instead, he prefers simply to lay his own unadorned feelings on the table. (The stunningly frank opening verse of "Today I'm Not So Sure" is typical of the album as a whole: "Didn't I promise always to/ Shelter and protect you?/ Didn't I answer 'Yes, I do'/? Well, today I'm not so sure.")

The arrangements are notably unadorned as well; Cole backs up his unpretentious singing with nothing but a couple of guitars and a piano. But it's a superbly produced album; the songs feel spare, not skimpy. Every

note counts here—and so does every word of Cole's lyrics, which are consistently intelligent but never showoffy. "Forgive me if I'm less than awed/ By your world-weary 26-year-olds," the 43-year-old Cole sings on the gorgeous, album-opening title track—and on every track that follows, he shows those twentysomethings how it's really done. ★★★★★ —PAUL MATWYCHUK

OVERPROOF SOUNDSYSTEM NOTHING TO PROOVE (DIFFERENT DRUMMER)

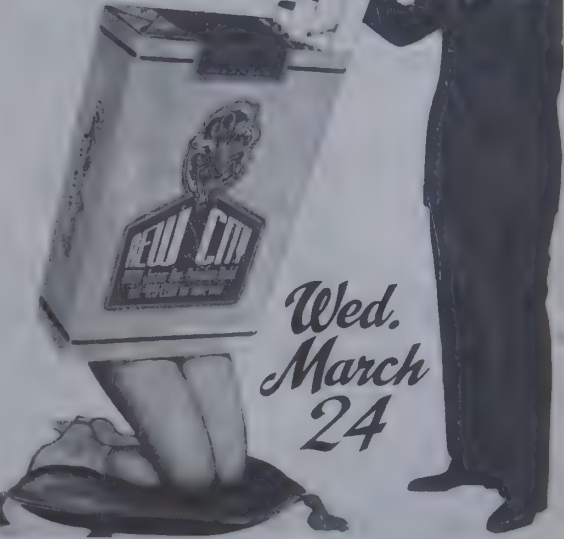
I first heard Overproof Soundsystem's playful "Watch What You Put Inna..." on Different Drummer's *A Decade in Dub '92-'02* mix compilation with DJ credits courtesy of Richard Dorfmeister. The silly reggae dancehall ditty, with its cautionary message about what gets rolled into joints, was the standout. On their debut LP, *Nothing to Prove*, it's but one great track amongst many. Less a group than a loose affiliation, Overproof Soundsystem is a Birmingham-based collective featuring members of Rockers Hi-Fi and G-Corp; their name is lifted from Different Drummer's Overproof reggae nights.

That jam-band spirit shows up most in the upbeat and assured crowd-pleasing lyrics. Numbers like "Fussing and Fighting" are all reggae peacenik

and "Riddim Rider" is a great two-step crossover track that would be right at home in a set of U.K. garage. The accents of Ras MC T-Weed and Juggla have West Indies overtones with an undercurrent of English ghetto. There's a nod to reggae's roots with a rework of Mad Professor's "Kunte Kinte," but the production of Jah Grizzly and Stallion and additional percussion by the Mighty Magoo give the disc a decidedly big-city sound. *Nothing to Prove* should keep hydroponic audiophiles and dubby big bass fiends thoroughly stoked. ★★★★★ —YURI WUENSCH

VARIOUS ARTISTS TRANCE CLASSICS: VOLUME 2 (MOONSHINE/KOCH)

Trance Classics: Volume 2 is like a kid's bag of Halloween candy—plenty of sweet stuff that might be too much of a good thing. Nostalgic treats by Art of Trance, Lustral, Rui Da Silva and Bedrock meet more modern trance incarnations by Ferry Corsten with "Punk" and Sasha's "Wavy Gravy." There's also some inedible toffee from DJ Sammy with "Boys of Summer," Ian Van Dahl's "Castles in the Sky" and Dario G's awful "Sunchyme." Overall, it's a solid two-disc set of feel-good tunes and mostly fond memories of raves gone by. ★★★ —YURI WUENSCH



Wed.
March
24

QUICK SPINS BY WHITEY AND TB PLAYER

The Living End Modern Artillery (Reprise)

Punky, fist-pumping goodness. It's rock, but they dabble shamelessly and effortlessly in rockabilly, punk, metal and ska. Are they anti-establishment? Maybe. Great shout-along anthems that sound political but never get too specific. (Don't wanna get lumped in with the Bruce Cockburn, y'know.)

Mimi Fox She's the Woman (Favored Nations)

Damn. We originally picked this album to review because: (a) Favored Nations albums are usually guitar crazy wankfests; and (b) with this title and Mimi's boyish good looks, the jokes write themselves. Of course, Ms. Fox had to go and spoil our fun by writing an incredibly tasteful album of jazz and blues. Her playing is impeccable (of course), the band is top-notch and the wanking is kept to a minimum. Pay attention, Mr. Val.

Belle and Sebastian I'm a Cuckoo (EP) (Rough Trade)

Those gloomy Scots and that cheerful producer Trevor Horn team up for a remarkably fun EP that injects a little sunshine into B&S's trademark gloom and strikes the perfect balance between contemporary musings and blatant Thin Lizzy rewrites (no, really). The best part is they acknowledge the pinch and serve up a few more, borrowing from Simon and Garfunkel, Steely Dan, old Stones and the Pet Shop Boys.

Throw in a great Avalanches remix of the title track and you've got a brilliant but brief slice of pop perfection. All hail the return of the mopers, lest they mope no more.

Pulley Matters (Epitaph)

Even though Pulley thinly veil their love of all things Bad Religion, what they do they so well that by song three you've forgiven them, cranked the car stereo and started gleefully fingering passing motorists. Derivative punk rock it may be, but at least it's superbly done.

Satyricon Volcano (Red Ink)

Yeah, yeah, I know, you're evil. I'm sure ol' Janne could find some redeeming qualities in this disc, but it just sounds like reheated Metallica B-sides to me.

Ricasso Pollution (BRC)

Ricasso opened for Starship. I lost my virginity to "We Built This City." Coincidence? I think not.

Lesser Gearhound (Matador)

Knob tweakouts and glitchy freakouts have never been done better. ●

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Circle the wagons

Buck 65 and Murray McLauchlan make an unlikely Songwriters' Circle team

BY DAVE JOHNSTON

I'm not sure if a hip-hop artist like Buck 65 would hook up with someone like Murray McLauchlan under circumstances other than the **Songwriters' Circle**. Of course, both are gifted lyricists and innovative musicians, which is what makes this Sunday afternoon gathering at the Winspear Centre during Edmonton's Juno Week worth attending.

Actually, it's not all that strange. The Juno-nominated Buck 65—he's in the running for Alternative Album of the Year for Talkin' *Honky Blues*—may be skilled with the rhymes but his inspiration comes from roots music, which is exactly where McLauchlan is coming from. Other young talent taking part are urban vocalist Esthero, Juno-nominated Danny Michel, female supergroup Shaye (i.e., Kim Stockwood, Damhnait Doyle and Tara McLean), roots-pop artist Liam Titcomb and

Edmonton's own cowboy, Corb Lund. The circle will be hosted by McLauchlan, Ian Thomas, Marc Jordan and Cindy Church.

The point of all this, of course, is to let audiences sneak a glimpse into the process of songwriting and learn a bit about the stories behind a few of their favourite tunes. To top it off, proceeds from tickets sold will go to Band Aid, a CARAS music education initiative that helps out schools offering music programs with \$10,000 grants for instruments. The show begins at noon on Sunday,

PREVIEW JUNOS

April 4 and tickets are available through the Winspear box office, starting at \$26.50.

That night, however, the Rexall Centre will be the centre of the country's attention as the **Juno Awards** are handed out to a lucky few on national television. Of course, you could buy a ticket and see the whole thing in person rather than camp out on the couch and turn on CTV. A new block of tickets for the show go on sale Thursday, March 18 through Ticketmaster, with prices ranging from \$57 to \$91.50.

Not convinced? It's a cheap price to pay in order to hang around with Canada's music elite not to mention an opportunity to enjoy a star-studded array of entertainment. Ben Heppner, In Essence Aaron Lines and Whitefish Jrs have been added to the list of performers, which already includes Bare-naked Ladies, Blackie and the Rodeo Kings, Michael Bubl , Kathleen Edwards, Finger Eleven, Nelly Furtado, Avril Lavigne, Sarah McLachlan, Nickelback, Simple Plan, Billy Talent and Three Days Grace. And how could we forget about the host, Alanis Morissette?

If you're looking for a chance to get a bit closer to the stars, you could hike out to West Edmonton Mall's Ice Palace on Saturday, April 3 and take part in the **Juno Fan Fare**. First of all, it's free. Second, it's a chance to get up close and personal with Nickelback, Sam Roberts, Doc Walker, Pilate, Brasmunk, the Dears, Nelly Furtado, Fefe Dobson, Choclaire and Shawn Desman. Last year's Fan Fare attracted more than 10,000 autograph seekers in Ottawa-Gatineau and they're predicting even more to show up this time around. The Juno Fan Fare starts at 11:30 a.m. and runs until 3:30 p.m. ●

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• Special dj set by David Stone

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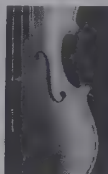
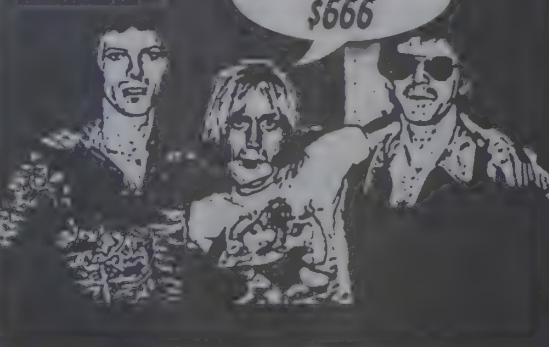
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classical notes

BY ALLISON KYDD

Liszt-minute substitution

On Wednesday, March 10, Croatian-born pianist Kemal Gekic breezed into town from Florida's International University, where he is the artist in residence. He was pinch-hitting for Canadian Louis Lortie, who cancelled his March 12 and 13 Masters' Series appearance with the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra because of a family emergency.

Obviously, cancellations aren't welcome, especially at short notice. It's a challenge to find replacements of equal stature and talent. Then there are the changes to the program, the fewer the better. "First you panic," says Winspear Centre publicist Jerrold Ellander, "but just for a minute. Then you start calling up agents and find out who's available." In this case there was serendipity at work. One highlight of the weekend concerts was to be Franz Liszt's technically and artistically demanding *Totentanz* (*Dance of Death*). It so happened that Rob McAleer, ESS artistic administrator, had met Gekic and knew he was an award-winning, CD-producing Liszt specialist, not to mention something of a maverick in the classical music world.

Gekic also did his part, first by answering his phone, then by being available and able to play Liszt at his most difficult without a lot of rehearsal, and finally by giving an impressive performance. He played more Liszt in the second half, this time the *Fantasy on Hungarian National Themes* (which replaced *Variations symphoniques*, by C sar Franck). Again, Gekic's pedal technique, hand positions and fingering were in the style of the composer, and his purple and black evening costume was a playful imitation of what Liszt might have worn. More important, his artistic expression suggested that, like Liszt, his virtuosity went beyond technique. The audience was disposed to think well of Gekic whatever he did, and this was more than just a competent performance.

Because the soloist transfixed both audience and orchestra and earned himself two standing ovations—only an encore coaxed the audience back into their seats—one could forget that the concert as a whole was exceptional. It began with the spooky fragments of contemporary Canadian composer Alexina Louie's *Songs of Paradise*. Then Liszt's *Mephisto Waltz* found a middle road between romance and orgy as it tossed the lead from one solo instrument to another and set the stage for what was yet to come. The final work was Francis Poulenc's *Sinfonietta*. By turns playful and lyrical, it was a refreshing contrast to the earlier, Romantic works.

Since the ESO announced its 2004-2005 season a week ago, one is reminded of other changes—for instance, the need to eventually select a new musical director. Again the organization has opted for a gradual transition. Several names on

next year's list of guest conductors now conjure up familiar faces, and a few are definite candidates. One wonders, however, if this polite selection process might backfire in the long run. With the orchestra playing so well and a new beau to admire every week, where's the advantage in settling down with just one?

But that's the future. This coming weekend, the Winspear Centre promises nostalgic favourites by Lorna Luft, youngest daughter of Judy Garland, in the Robbins Pops Series' *Songs My Mother Taught Me*. Also on Friday, the Piano Plus Series offers *Hugo Wolf: An Evening of Song at All Saints' Anglican Cathedral*. Soprano Iren Bartok, mezzo-soprano Beth Raycroft and baritone Ron Long join Jeremy Spurgeon, who'll be in piano mode. Rumour is the series was the bribe that got the cathedral's grand piano. Someone had to play Gershwin within those hallowed walls.

Sunday presents a choice. Still downtown, at Robertson-Wesley United Church at 3 p.m., there's the Alberta Baroque Ensemble featuring mezzo-soprano Rosemarie van der Hooft and classical guitarist Trevor Sanders. Not so far away, at St. Andrew's United Church, the 16-member Edmonton Recorder Society is supplemented by percussionist Donna Mae Jellard, harpsichordist Charlotte Reinken and poet Ted Blodgett as narrator. What, you didn't know March is Play-the-Recorder Month? On Sunday evening, *Music at Convocation Hall* presents violinist Guillaume Tardif and pianist Jacques Despr s playing Mozart, Beethoven, Wieniawski and Louie. Tardif and Despr s also appear at McDougall United Church on March 24, for *Wednesdays at Noon*. ●

Bruce Campbell
takes care of
business as Elvis
in *Bubba Ho-Tep*



King B

BY DARREN ZENKO

We always say *Bubba Ho-Tep* wasn't released; it escaped."

From his hideaway home—appropriately enough, a cabin tucked away in the woods of Oregon—Bruce Campbell is speaking of his latest film. Don "Phantasm AND Beastmaster? No way!" Coscarelli's *Bubba Ho-Tep*, in which he stars as a geriatric Elvis (the King having traded places in '76 with an impersonator who liked drugs even more than he did) who teams up with a black JFK (Ossie Davis: "They dyed me this colour!") to fight an undead Egyptian mummy in a Texas nursing home. It's a wicked film, certainly the first horror-comedy to thoughtfully address the serious and growing problem of elderly depression, and Campbell's performance is one of the greatest biographical characterizations ever committed to celluloid—and, yes, that includes Jim Caviezel's multiplatinum-selling sashimi Savior.

And, bizarre though *Bubba Ho-Tep* may be, it's also the kind of thing one expects from Campbell: a full-throttle piece of acting from a hard-working actor who loves to get weird. Ever since he exploded into geek consciousness as eternally quotable chainsaw-handed demon-slayer Ash in pal Sam Raimi's microbudgeted cult classic *Evil Dead*, Campbell has been, to put it mildly, a "fan favourite." From *Dead* to doomed sci-fi Western *The Adventures of Brisco County, Jr.*, from *Xena: Warrior Princess* to the Michael Crichton abortion *Congo*, from Elvis through to his upcoming role as "Snooty Usher" in Raimi's *Spider-Man 2*, Campbell is the undisputed King of the Bs.

But what's past is prologue, you know? Back to the phone, and *Bubba*.... [Note: for purposes of readability, the interviewer has been digitally altered to sound like much less of a gibbering fanboy.]

Bruce Campbell: In 2002 I took a print around with me to various places and kinda salivated folks in different markets. Coscarelli was incredibly pragmatic and diligent and aggressive when it came to distributing the movie. Most filmmakers don't know what to do when it comes to distribution; he did it himself. He and his family did this mom-and-pop operation where, you know, they just made it happen. I went to as many screenings as I could to help 'em out. I went to a bunch of... Good Lord, I went to probably 10 or 12 local screenings in different cities.

Vue Weekly: You're known for being devoted to your fans, but even you must get burned out from so much fan service.

BC: Yeah, you can overexpose yourself. I did a book tour [for his memoir *If Chins Could Kill*] in '01 that was 55 cities, and after that I wanted to just, you know, shoot myself and tear hotel rooms apart. So that gets really old. But the trick is you have to pace yourself out. I'm gonna tour again in '05 for a new book and a film I'm doing right now called *The Man With the Screaming Brain*. I just got it financed, it's for the Sci-Fi Channel. It's a story I wrote, and I'll direct and be in it. It's sort of like *A Christmas Story* with a brain transplant. It's a morality tale with sort of an asshole American businessman.

VW: Nice that you can get things like that done. Do you think that, with cable and satellite and DVD, there's a sort of B-movie renaissance going on?

BC: Depends on how you frame it. Something like the *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* remake isn't necessarily done 'cause they love the original. They redid it because someone wanted to make a bunch of money. They're just taking a fashionable brand and casting fashionable young people and redoing it. I think that's okay; it's just I'm never that impressed when someone takes a whole idea and revamps it. Why, man? Why remake *Psycho*?

My theory is, there's about 25 years' worth of stories in Hollywood they just keep remaking. What's in movie theatres now was on TV in the mid-'70s. It's my worst nightmare come true, because all the shitty TV shows I hated in the '70s are now shitty movies that I hate in the year 2000.

VW: Let's talk *Bubba Ho-Tep* for a second. How did you approach Elvis?

BC: Like an old man. Not so much like the guy you see in *Clambake*. He was even imitating himself at one point, so you have to move beyond that and be the person, be that older guy with that background and those characteristics and those mannerisms. Nothing is as exaggerated, 'cause he's not onstage. It's all pretty straightforward. It's straight, it's not winking, it's not a ha-ha parody. It's these charac-

PROFILE HORROR

ters put in a serious situation, and following what happens to them. We agreed early on not to go over the top, so that was the most important thing. And the substory is, what do you do about old age and mortality?

VW: What were your feelings about Elvis when you started preparing for the role?

BC: I thought he was a joke when I first became aware of him. Because, when I graduated, that was '76 and he was dead by '77. So by the time he was on my radar he was kind of bloated and kind of a self-parody. And then, having got to know him better through looking at a lot of his stuff, documentaries and background stuff, I have a much greater appreciation for how long he was around, how long he was at the top of his game. He was pretty hot shit there for a while.

VW: You've been around for a while too, and at the top of your game. Did playing a 70-year-old Elvis make you feel a bit old yourself?

BC: It made me feel young! Because when I took the makeup off

every day I looked younger than the makeup. Normally when you take your makeup off you look older, so this was a good exception.

VW: What's the secret to a solid, 20-year-and-running career?

BC: Just keep improving so you maintain some sort of value within that arena. If over the course of 20 years you don't figure a few things out, then you don't really need to be there. I did an essay once for a magazine about how usually they get rid of actors in L.A. once they start getting good. Guys like Jan-Michael Vincent I think started... no, sorry, not Vincent. What's his name? The guy who starred in *The Fugitive*?

VW: Damn, I've kinda got a mental block now too.

BC: Um... shit.

VW: David... Janssen?

BC: There you go. He was 35 the first season when it started. And in a TV show today, at 35, he'd be someone's father. So the age thing has really shifted. I always make the case of "Get the old facts that've been around 'cause they've figured some things out." And there's less BS, too. It's a weird job, it's not a normal job. People shouldn't look at it as a normal job.

VW: What else have you got cooking?

BC: Another thing for the Sci-Fi Channel, called *Alien Apocalypse*. It's sort of like *Spartacus*, with aliens.

VW: These descriptions: "*Spartacus* with aliens"; "*A Christmas Story* with a brain transplant"; "Elvis and JFK fight a mummy in a nursing home"... there's just so much joy behind them...

BC: [Laughs.] Well, those things entertain me more than some guy who gets a stupid-ass disease or something. I don't really care about that. For me, movies are movies—even a film is a movie. It's all make-believe, it's all BS, it's all comin' out of someone's head, so I want to have a little fun with it. I mean, look: not everything can have Reese Witherspoon in it. It's a big hemisphere, there's lots of tastes.

VW: Any advice for independent filmmakers dreaming away out there?

BC: Okay, well, you've got *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* out. It's a remake. Go see the original! It's like 1974, and it's scarier than hell because it's so raw and so real. It's a docu-horror. Check out *Night of the Living Dead*, the very original by George Romero. Just a nice little low-budget movie that cost \$12 or something. These movies have been copied ever since. It's amazing. So, you don't really have to have a lot of dough to be effective. Look at early Spielberg. Look at *Jaws*, don't look at his later stuff. Now that's a cool adventure movie, a horror adventure. I tend to look at the early work of most filmmakers, because that's when they did a movie to do a movie.

VW: They still had something to prove.

BC: Yeah. A lot of filmmakers, they had their best shot at it first time out of the gate; they'll never put that some kind of time and interest and attention into a movie. Most guys just wind up making the same movie over and over again, stylistically.

VW: You're out at conventions, at film festivals.... Anything you've seen that you'd like to turn people onto?

BC: You know, I don't really do the festivals. I'm a realist when it comes to that; I only tour when I've got something to hawk. I don't really go around like "Hey! What's goin' on, ma-a-an?!" I don't read *Variety* or any of that, because the movie business just isn't that interesting to me, for some reason, news-wise. I like working in it, but I like working in it out of Oregon. They don't shoot anything in L.A. anymore anyway, so why live there?

VW: To shake hands and kiss ass.

BC: Ah, well, you know... that and a buck-fifty will get you a cup of coffee. None of it really adds up to much, I've found. I never really played that game. That's why it's better to go off, try and get the money yourself, try

What Mamet are you from?

Mannered, cryptic *Spartan* may be David Mamet's weirdest movie yet

By BRIAN GIBSON

David Mamet's *Spartan* begins with a military exercise in which soldier Curtis (Derek Luke) tries to catch colleague Jackie (Tia Texada) in the woods, foreshadowing the hunt for a missing girl that grips the Secret Service, who assign shadowy military agent Scott (Val Kilmer) to lead the ruthless hunt. There's a lot of talk about where this girl could be for the first hour of the film,

although it's fairly clear early on that she's the president's daughter. The more important question is, where the heck is the real David Mamet?

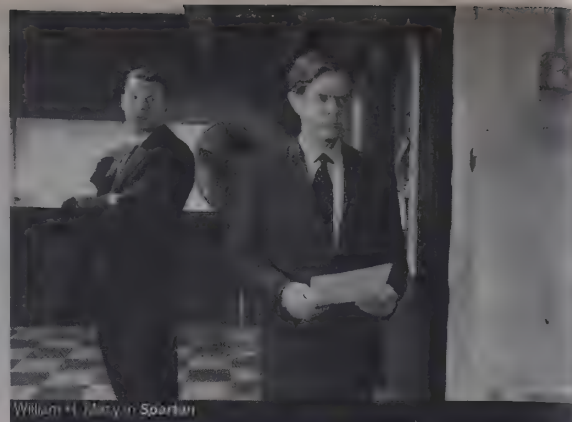
Best known for putting macho pretensions and gender conflict under the microscope in such plays as *Glen-garry Glen Ross* and *Oleanna*, Mamet cut his director's teeth on such con-

REVUE THRILLER

game plot-twisters as *House of Games* and *The Spanish Prisoner*. He even sneaked a stellar adaptation of a Terence Rattigan play, *The Winslow Boy*, into theatres at the end of the '90s. But then he penned the overpraised script for the dark political satire *Wag the Dog*, directed a ho-hum satire of

Hollywood, *State and Main*, and followed it up with the passable thriller *Heist*. Now Mamet, with his purposely stilted, cryptic dialogue, is trying to make his mark in the secret agent genre with an odd movie that is unabashedly pro-Marine but deeply cynical about the U.S. government.

Spartan often works as a thriller—it's got a rapid-fire plot that moves at breakneck speed, blasting from double-cross setpiece to shoot-'em-up without ever easing off the trigger. But by whipping through his weighty plot's many doublecrosses and cover-ups, Mamet doesn't so much build suspense as drill it into the audience. You're pinballed from scene to scene in a bizarrely enclosed world where there are no bystanders, no extraneous people—just Kilmer and Co. play-



William H. Macy in *Spartan*

ing out their parts, mouthing often bizarre lines and emotionlessly navigating a byzantine plot. (During Scott's investigation, two of his partners are killed, he comes across a Middle East pipeline for selling teenage girls into sexual slavery, kills an Arab

prisoner and death row inmate, and discovers that he is being tracked by others in the Secret Service.)

The actors, including Ed O'Neill and Mamet standby William H. Macy, do their best with the writer's often tinny dialogue. Kilmer, with his squinty, steely gaze, delivers his thoughts on tracking a person: "In the city, always a reflection. In the woods, always a sound." As the lone wolf agent drops more and more "babies" and "honeys" when talking to men and women alike, the lines get odder and more ponderous: "You've gone through the looking glass. Was it better than miniature golf?" A young woman can't even use contractions or speak colloquially, instead uttering the writer's typically clipped, formal prose "She was sick. She was not very well."

THE SOLE POINT of the disjointed opening sequence seems to be to emphasize the perverse solidarity of the Marines, who are so brain-deadeningly loyal that both Curtis and Jackie insist on helping Scott in his mission and robotically speak of "finding the girl" at any cost. One section, involving a rigged prison break and an unbelievably amateurish screw-up by Curtis, should have been cut, while Curtis and Scott's detective skills are almost supernatural. The climax is melodramatic, and Mamet can't handle emotional scenes: Scott's frank talk with the girl's boyfriend is implausible, and his first discussion with the girl rings false. The girl turns out to be a whiny, snotty rich kid (big surprise) who's no more worth saving than any other victim of a sex ring. But since she's the president's daughter, self-described government "worker bee" Scott must do his duty, which he never really questions, even though he's being tricked or used at every turn.

Mamet's plot moves so quickly that I had little time to notice *Spartan*'s flimsy clichés, and his dialogue is so peculiar and quirky that it intrigued and bored me in equal measure. This movie ultimately left me cold—it's a truly spartan thriller: a clinical, spare exercise by a self-serious plotter that doesn't leave any room for standout sequences, emotional depth or some old-fashioned, exuberant fun. **B**

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The persistence of memory

Jim Carrey tries to erase his ex in *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*

By STEPHEN NOTLEY

It's a simple procedure, and tempting. You're heartbroken, you're not happy, you want to move on. If you like, you can bring the items and totems of your no-longer-loved one down to your office and we'll erase him or her from your memory with a little selective brain damage. You can get over everything in one big go. Sound good? No? Well, we just did the procedure on your ex-

girlfriend. Now whaddya think?

That's where we find Joel Barish (Jim Carrey) in *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*, the newest dive into the mysteries of consciousness and identity from *Being John Malkovich* writer Charlie Kaufman. Kaufman has a lock on brilliantly original script concepts, and as he says in *Adaptation*,

REVUE MINDBENDER

he's frustrated and bored with typical Hollywood movie plots with their automatic payoffs, love interests, car chases and goal-achieving characters. As a result it's no surprise that *Eternal Sunshine* defies easy packaging or simple plot-summarizing. Let's just say that Carrey decides to have the proce-

cedure done and it involves Mark Ruffalo, Kirsten Dunst and Elijah Wood as drunken, dope-smoking memory-erase technicians busting into his house and expunging his brain while he sleeps and dreams his way back through his memories.

Is this a comedy? Well, parts of it are funny, but no, it's not a comedy. Is it a love story? No—if anything, it's an anti-love story about the dissolution of a romance. It's an icy film, cold not only in its images of snowswept beaches and freezing rain, but also in its conclusions, its dizzily arrived-at results.

Jim Carrey acts in this movie. There's no shtick; it's as real and simple a performance as Adam Sandler's in *Punch-Drunk Love*. His Joel is a guy without the animating spark of Jim Carrey-ness, a keeps-to-himself fella who doesn't make eye contact and doesn't talk much. His hair's a little mussed, he's a little dopey and he doesn't really seem right for hair-dying drinker Clementine, played with assertive self-confidence by Kate Winslet. And yet they are together, or were, and now we get to see it all unravel backwards in time.

IT'S AN ODD THING to move backwards through a failed relationship, with the freshest memories being the most recent, just-before-the-breakup experiences, thick with all the dislike, the frustration, the divisions and we're-totally-wrong-for-each-other stuff that made everything fail. We see nasty things like Carrey watching Winslet sip her wine at



Tom Wilkinson and Jim Carrey in *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*

dinner and sourly thinking "She's gonna be drunk and stupid now" to himself, or the last time he saw her, storming angrily down the street telling him to "fuck off, faggot."

But to go backwards through an unraveling is a raveling, and so we see the relationship wind together the farther back we go. Joel gets to know Clementine better than he ever had because somehow the Clementine in his mind is alive and knows what's happening. She becomes an active participant in his journey back through his life as they try to hide, to protect what they had, digging back into his history to find refuge in hidden or shameful memories. And as they go, knowingly moving back through their time together, they reconsider their choices and tell each other what they were thinking back then.

Kaufman plays crazy and subtle with his narrative, sliding flashbacks into memories into present-living dreams. *Eternal Sunshine* isn't as overtly modern-fantastical as *Being John Malkovich*, where early weirdness like the perfectly bizarre midget-sized 7

1/2 floor prepared the audience for the notion that behind a filing cabinet there could be a tunnel that led into John Malkovich's mind. *Eternal Sunshine* has a very real-life look, particularly at first, with dreary train stations and wet streets. But as reality becomes an active lucid, dream director Michel Gondry plays sneaky tricks, erasing signs and dropping cars and deleting fences, perfectly handling the strange transitions and curious side roads of Kaufman's story.

Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind isn't a feel-good movie, though it has many sweet and beautiful moments: Kaufman's ending, as we see the memory-wiped couple getting to know each other again, isn't hopeful. But it is bracing, like an icy wind to clear the mind. Like a dream, it's difficult to recall and impossible to forget. Check it out. **B**

ETERNAL SUNSHINE OF THE SPOTLESS MIND

Directed by Michel Gondry • Written by Charlie Kaufman • Starring Jim Carrey, Kate Winslet, Elijah Wood and Kirsten Dunst • Opens Fri, Mar 19

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Winger and still champion

Rosanna Arquette bemoans the fate of older actresses in *Searching for Debra Winger*

By JOSEF BRAUN

In the first moments of *Searching for Debra Winger*, actress-turned-documentarian Rosanna Arquette explains how the first movie she ever saw, Powell and Pressburger's *The Red Shoes*, planted within her a question that would come to take on a powerful resonance once she reached her forties: can a woman pursue her art while still fulfilling a role as partner and/or mother? The question feels perilously broad, and accordingly, Arquette appears on camera a number of times to confess that she doesn't really know where she's going with it.

Arquette arranges ostensibly casual on-camera conversations, usually around drinks or lunch, between herself and a number of mostly famous actresses to talk about the difficulties

of maintaining a film career after the bloom of youth has faded (and along with it, the "fuckability" factor prized by many a sleazy producer)—and particularly once highly distracting factors such as children enter the picture. Warning signs flare up as we settle into watching so many women of great privilege and glamour try to contextualize their career grievances under Arquette's uncertain guidance.

REVUE DVD

More than one moment in *Searching for Debra Winger* could pass for an Oprah Book Club supper and viewers should be forewarned about such cringe-inducing scenes as the one where Sharon Stone repeatedly says "You go, girl" to an off-camera Julianne Moore or Cate Blanchett.

Perhaps the film's highlight is a lunch where successful British actresses Charlotte Rampling and the late, great Katrin Cartlidge enter the conversation like creatures from another planet where things like passion for one's craft actually dominate one's career choices. Unable to

complain as vociferously about the absence of good parts for women (because they make art films instead of Hollywood blockbusters), Rampling and Cartlidge don't contribute very much to *Searching for Debra Winger* because their experiences have little to do to with what Arquette eventually discovers to be her real theme: balancing domesticity, privacy and creativity, Arquette realizes, may not be a problem for all film stars—just the ones who have to abide by Hollywood's skewed value system.

ARQUETTE'S INITIAL meandering is saved by candid interviews (Vanessa Redgrave and Alfre Woodard provide highlights) and especially by the sharp, smart editing imposed by editor Gail Yasunaga, who cuts frequently from several distinct yet related conversations with ease and elegance. The results are more anecdotal than conclusive, yet they still provide food for thought, prompt some terrific laughs (mostly via Whoopi Goldberg and her self-effacing references to the breadth of her ass) and call into question the ways

The not-so-lovely *Bones*

Our Alt Film Columnist advises swearing off Canadian romcoms forever

By BRIAN GIBSON

Dear Alt Film Columnist,
I have a hardcore addiction to Canadian romantic comedies. Every time I go to a video store or pass a theatre, I just can't help satisfying my kink. My partner wants to see a Hollywood epic, a big-budget action flick or even a foreign film, but I keep indulging my fetish instead. Recently, I saw an ad for *Love, Sex and Eating the Bones*, about a Toronto guy who falls in love with a woman but can't perform for her in bed because of his porn addiction. I really want to go see it, but I'm worried this will be the last straw for my partner. Should I see it behind her back or break off our dysfunctional film relationship? Please help.

Sincerely, Canadian Romcom User in Danger

Dear CRUD,
In the name of research, I watched *Love, Sex and Eating the Bones*. And trust me—you shouldn't have gotten your hopes up for this one. For your own sake, and your partner's, kick this awful habit immediately. Go cold turkey.

The latest pusher of lovey-dovey schlock that you need for your fix, *CRUD*, is a man named Sudz Sutherland. He wrote and directed this

film, which needs more than Viagra to keep it from flagging—to start with, I would prescribe sharper writing and more interesting characters.

Maybe part of your perverse fascination with Canadian romantic comedies is their low-budget sets and their refusal to talk specifically about their setting. Well, when it's not taking place in a fake-looking porn store

REVUE ROMANCE

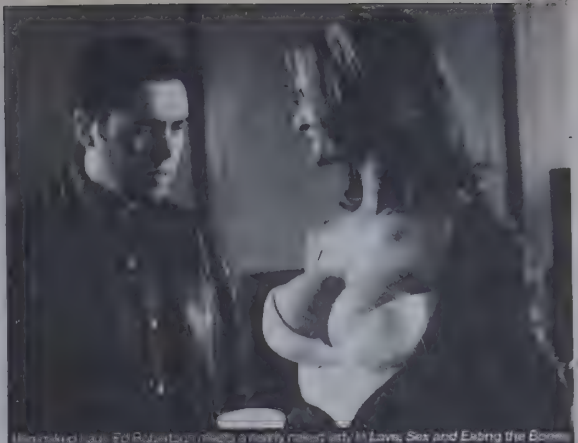
or bachelor suite, *Love, Sex, and Eating the Bones* never talks about the predominantly black area of Toronto that is Michael's (Harper Hill) neighbourhood. And the movie exists in, but never questions, a world of macho brothers—swaggering layers and players who brag about their conquests and anticipate their next cool move.

Michael's a security guard and aspiring photographer who masturbates to his favourite porn star, Lisette. But when he runs into market researcher Jasmine (Marlyne Affleck) at the laundromat and they start going out, it's not her longtime celibacy that provides the usual hurdle to happily-ever-after. It turns out that Michael can't get it up for Jasmine because of his triple-X obsession. The film's climax comes when Jasmine's wary cousin Peaches (Kai Soremekun) rigs a contest so that Michael can be with Lisette in an on-set sex scene.

If you're still intrigued, *CRUD*, you may be too far gone. *Love, Sex and Eating the Bones* is as mechanical and unimaginative as the Lisette porn

scenes that Michael routinely jerks off to. The chemistry between the two leads can't overcome limp comic scenes and choppy editing. Sutherland layers on some hammy effects: a TV image of Lisette comes to sputtering, staticky life, perhaps as a cheesy homage to David Cronenberg's *Video-drome*; Michael's photos are blotted out by the glowing light that shines forth whenever he opens up his portfolio album. (But how good can his pics really be when his best explanation of his shutterbug dreams is: "I want to capture those decisive moments when shit changes a little bit.")

Does Michael learn to stop seeing women as sexual images? Not really—he tells Jasmine that the only reason he knows he has a problem is "because it cost me you." And on the



Michael (Harper Hill) and Lisette (Lisette) make a really nasty dirty in *Love, Sex and Eating the Bones*.

basis of this impotent flick, *CRUD*, I would say that you should learn to share your partner's film tastes, or I wouldn't blame her for ditching you.

Critically yours, AFC

LOVE, SEX AND EATING THE BONES
Written and directed by Sudz Sutherland
• Starring Hill Harper, Marlyne Affleck and Kai Soremekun • Opens Fri, Mar 19



Rosanna Arquette (left) and Jane Fonda in *Searching for Debra Winger*.

in which modern movie stars are created and who they're created for—which these days often seems to be adolescent boys instead of adults.

The film takes its title from Arquette's nagging question as to why an actress as talented, attractive and formerly "hot" as Debra Winger would get up and quit the business entirely as she did in the mid-'90s. (In fact, since Arquette completed her documentary, Winger has come out of retirement to produce and star in her husband Arliss Howard's 2001 film *Big Bad Love* and has since appeared in at least two other pictures.) When Arquette finally "finds" Winger an hour in, Winger simply

states that she found other things to reward her besides the magic of acting. This hardly feels like a revelation, but when contrasted with Jane Fonda's riveting description of nailing a pivotal scene in one of her films, it does give us a pretty fascinating inside look at the strange and challenging lives led by women who attempt to find fulfillment in what can sometimes seem like the world's most superficial and sexist industry. ●

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Bubba Ho-Tep (M) Bruce Campbell and Ossie Davis star in *Phantom* director Don Coscarelli's offbeat horror movie about a Texas nursing home where an aging Elvis Presley and a senile black man who believes he's actually John F. Kennedy do battle with a soul-sucking Egyptian mummy. *Zeidler Hall, The Citadel; Fri-Mon, Mar 18-21 (7 and 9pm)*

The Corporation (CO, G) Directors Mark Achbar (*Manufacturing Consent*) and Jennifer Abbott's provocative documentary about the psychopathic, conscienceless inner workings of the corporate mind. Featuring interviews with Naomi Klein, Noam Chomsky and Michael Moore.

Dawn of the Dead (CO, FP) Sarah Polley, Ving Rhames and Mekhi Phifer star in director Zack Snyder's remake of George Romero's satirical 1978 horror movie about a small band of humans who barricade themselves in a massive shopping mall when the earth is taken over by a vast army of zombies.

Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind (CO, FP) Jim Carrey, Kate Winslet, Kirsten Dunst and Elijah Wood star in *Human Nature* director Michel Gondry's dark comedy about a man who learns his ex-girlfriend has undergone an experimental procedure to erase all her memories of their relationship and decides to get his memories wiped out as well. Screenplay by Charlie Kaufman.

The Last Hurrah (EFS) Spencer Tracy, Dianne Foster and Jeffrey Hunter star in *The Quiet Man* director John Ford's affectionate 1958 political drama about an old-school Irish-Catholic Boston mayor campaigning for his final term of office. *Provincial Museum Auditorium (102 Ave & 128 St); Mon, Mar 22 (8pm)*

Love, Sex and Eating the Bones (FP) Hill Harper, Marlyne Afflack and Mark Taylor star in writer/director Sudz Sutherland's romantic comedy about a porn-addicted man who must put his unrealistic fantasies aside when he meets the real-life girl of his dreams.

Taking Lives (CO, FP) Angelina Jolie, Ethan Hawke and Olivier Martinez star in *The Salton Sea* director D.J. Caruso's thriller about an FBI profiler on the trail of an elusive serial killer who assumes the lives and identities of each of his victims.

FIRST-RUN MOVIES

Agent Cody Banks: Destination London (CO, FP) Frankie Muniz, Anthony Anderson and Hannah Spearritt star in *Twin Town* director Kevin Allen's sequel to the 2003 tween-targeted hit, in which a teenaged CIA agent travels to England for his latest undercover assignment.

The Barbarian Invasions (P) Rémy Girard, Marie-Josée Croze and Stéphane Rousseau star in writer/director Denys Arcand's Oscar-winning sequel to his 1986 arthouse hit *The Decline of the American Empire*, in which an aging, philandering academic makes peace with his son and his old circle of friends, colleagues and lovers before dying of cancer. In French with English subtitles.

The Butterfly Effect (FP) Ashton Kutcher, Amy Smart and Ethan Suplee star in writer/directors Eric Bress and J. Mackye Gruber's sci-fi mindbender about a young man who figures out how to travel back in time to his childhood, and who must return to the past over and over again to repair the disastrous effects his voyages have on his future reality.

Calendar Girls (FP) Helen Mirren and Julie Walters star in *Loving Grace* director Nigel Cole's fish-out-of-clothing comedy, based on a true story, about a group of British women who doff their duds for a calendar and a good cause.

Cold Mountain (CO, FP) Jude Law, Nicole Kidman, Renée Zellweger, Kathy Baker, Philip Seymour Hoffman and Natalie Portman star in *The English Patient* director Anthony Minghella's epic, episodic film version of Charles Frazier's novel about a Civil War deserter and his grueling trek back home to the bride he left behind in North Carolina.

The Company (P) Neve Campbell, Malcolm McDowell and James Franco star in *Nashville* director Robert Altman's plotless backstage portrait of Chicago's Joffrey Ballet, with particular emphasis on a rising young female dancer and the troupe's mercurial artistic director.

Confessions of a Teenage Drama Queen (CO, FP) Lindsay Lohan, Adam Garcia and Alison Pill star in director Sara Gargan's adaptation of Dylan Sheldon's YA novel about a teenage girl who campaigns for the lead in the school play as a way of re-establishing her popularity after her family moves from Greenwich Village to a god-forsaken New Jersey suburb.

Dirty Dancing: Havana Nights (CO) Romola Garai and Diego Luna star in *Telling Lies in America* director Guy Ferland's romance, "inspired by" the hit 1987 Patrick

Swayze vehicle, about a lonely American teen who falls in love with a sexy Cuban dancer while staying with her strict-minded parents at a resort in 1958 Havana.

Eurotrip (FP) Michelle Trachtenberg, Scott Mechlowicz, Jacob Pitts and Travis Wester star in director Jeff Schaffer's teen comedy about a high-school graduate who takes his three friends on a wacky adventure across Europe on the way to his first face-to-face meeting with his sexy German pen pal.

50 First Dates (CO, FP) Adam Sandler, Drew Barrymore, Sean Astin and Rob Schneider star in *Anger Management* director Peter Segal's romantic comedy about a veterinarian who attempts to have a relationship with a girl whose short-term memory loss means he has to get her to fall in love with him every single time they meet.

Hidalgo (CO, FP) Viggo Mortensen, Malcolm McDowell and Omar Sharif star in *Honey, I Shrunk the Kids* director Joe Johnston's exotic equestrian epic, set in Saudi Arabia in 1890, about an American Pony Express courier to travels to the desert to take part in a lucrative but dangerous and grueling horse race.

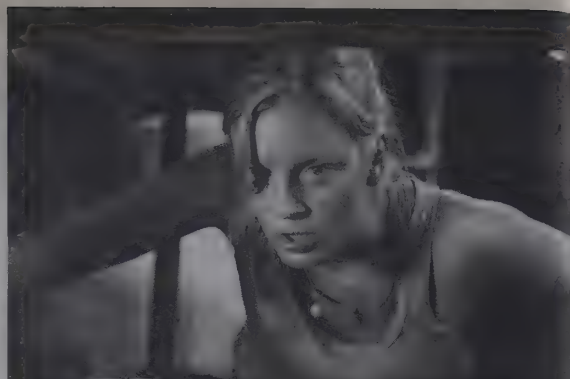
The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King (CO, FP) Elijah Wood, Ian McKellen, Viggo Mortensen and Liv Tyler star in the long-awaited concluding chapter of director Peter Jackson's epic film adaptation of J.R.R. Tolkien's trilogy of fantasy novels about a band of hobbits, trolls, elves, wizards and humans who embark on a quest to destroy an evil, all-powerful ring.

Miracle (FP) Kurt Russell, Patricia Clarkson and Noah Emmerich star in *Tumbleweeds* director Gavin O'Connor's inspirational sports picture about Herb Brooks, the coach who led the U.S. hockey team to a memorable upset victory over the Soviets at the 1980 Winter Olympics.

Monster (CO) Charlize Theron and Christina Ricci star in writer/director Patty Jenkins's sympathetic biopic about Aileen Wuornos, the troubled woman who in the '80s became known as "America's first female serial killer," and her needy relationship with her emotionally stunted lesbian lover.

Mystic River (FP) Sean Penn, Kevin Bacon and Tim Robbins star in *Unforgiven* director Clint Eastwood's moody drama, set in working-class Boston, about three childhood friends whose traumatic memories of the past are revived when one, now a police detective, begins to suspect another of killing the third's daughter. Based on the novel by Dennis Lehane.

NASCAR 3D: The IMAX Experience (FP) Kiefer Sutherland and Jeff Gordon are fea-



Do you think Sarah Polley ever picks up movie magazines or watches the Oscars and wonders why Scarlett Johansson seems to be having her career? Back in 1998, Polley was being touted as Hollywood's next thing, but neither *Go* nor *Quelven* lit up the box office or scored with critics. Anyway, people forget, and since then Polley has quietly retreated into more modest projects like *My Life Without Me* (as well as developing her own skills as a director and screenwriter). She's been giving earnest, deadpan performances in moody Canadian films for so long, in fact, that it's positively mindblowing to see her blowing away zombies alongside Ving Rhames in the new remake of George Romero's splatter landmark *Dawn of the Dead*. What's next—Molly Parker, vampire slayer?

tured in *Free Willy* director Simon Wincer's jumbo-screen documentary about the history of the NASCAR racing circuit and the cutting-edge technology that the sport's top drivers rely on to win competitions.

The Passion of the Christ (CO, FP) Jim Caviezel and Monica Bellucci star in *Braveheart* director Mel Gibson's ultra-controversial, blood-soaked Biblical epic depicting the final 12 hours in the life of Jesus of Nazareth. In Latin and Aramaic with English subtitles.

Secret Window (CO, FP) Johnny Depp, John Turturro and Maria Bello star in *The Trigger Effect* writer/director David Koepp's psychological thriller about a newly divorced writer who is stalked at his remote cottage by a psychotic stranger who claims he stole a story idea from him. Based on the novella by Stephen King.

The Snow Walker (CO) Barry Pepper, Annabella Plagattuk and James Cromwell star in writer/director Charles Martin Smith's adventure film about a bush pilot who must fight to stay alive when he gets stranded in the Arctic tundra with a sickly Inuit woman. Based on a short story by Farley Mowat.

Spartan (CO) Val Kilmer, Derek Luke and William H. Macy star in *Heist* writer/director David Mamet's terse thriller about a secret agent assigned to rescue the daughter of the U.S. president from a team of kidnappers, only to suspect he's a pawn in an even more sinister plot.

Starky and Hutch (CO, FP) Ben Stiller, Owen Wilson, Vince Vaughn and Snoop Dogg star in *Old School* director Todd Phillips's irreverent film version of the 1970s TV cop show about a pair of mismatched policemen who fight crime with the aid of their souped-up Ford Torino and their omniscient street informer Huggy Bear.

The Triplets of Belleville (P) Writer/director Sylvain Chomet's unique, nearly wordless animated feature about a clubfooted old woman who enlists the aid of a 1930s vocal trio to rescue her son, a champion cyclist who has been kidnapped by a gang of sinister hoodlums.

Twisted (CO, FP) Ashley Judd, Samuel L. Jackson and Andy Garcia star in *Quills* director Philip Kaufman's lurid thriller about a police officer whose murder investigation takes a disquieting turn when the killer begins targeting all her former lovers.

LEGEND

CO: Cineplex Odeon, 444-5468
EFS: Edmonton Film Society, 439-5285
FP: Famous Players
GA: Garneau Theatre, 433-0728
L: Leduc Cinema, 986-2728
M: Metro Cinema, 425-9212
P: Princess Theatre, 433-0728

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THE COMPANY

Nightly 9:00 pm
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+PG+ (not recommended for young children)

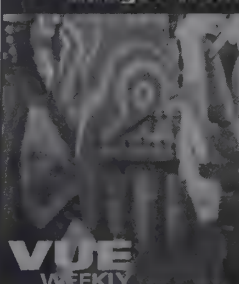


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Sophia PODRYHULA-SHAW,
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FILM LISTINGS

Showtimes for Friday, March 20 to Thursday, March 26

All showtimes are subject to change at any time. Please confirm before leaving for confirmation.

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Daily 7:00 Sat/Sun 1:00

THE BARBARIAN INVASIONS

Mature theme
Daily 7:00 Sat/Sun 1:00

THE COMPANY

Not recommended for young children
Daily 9:00 Sat/Sun 3:00

METRO CINEMA

9625-101A Ave. 432-1027

BUBBA HO-TEP

Coarse language. Fri/Sat/Sun 7:00 9:00

GRANDIN THEATRE

Grandin Mall, Sir Winston Churchill Ave. 432-9522

STARSKY AND HUTCH

Daily 1:30 3:40 7:20 9:20

SECRET WINDOW

Violence. Daily 12:30 2:45 7:10 9:00

AGENT CODY BANKS 2: DESTINATION LONDON

Daily 12:45 3:00 6:30 8:30

TAKING LIVES

Violence. Daily 1:15 3:45 6:50 9:10

HIDALGO

Violence. Daily 1:00 3:30 7:00 9:30

LEDUC CINEMAS

1700-50 Street 432-2020

THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST

English subtitles. Brutal and gory violence, disturbing content. Daily 7:00 9:30 Sat/Sun 1:00 3:30

SECRET WINDOW

Violence. Daily 7:10 9:20 Sat/Sun 1:10 3:20

STARSKY AND HUTCH

Daily 7:20 9:20 Sat/Sun 1:20 3:20

HIDALGO

Violence. Daily 6:50 9:30 Sat/Sun 1:10 3:40

WETASKIWIN CINEMAS

1010-50 Street 432-2020

THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST

English subtitles. Brutal and gory violence, disturbing content. Daily 7:00 9:30 Sat/Sun 1:00 3:30

AGENT CODY BANKS 2: DESTINATION LONDON

Daily 7:10 9:20 Sat/Sun 1:10 3:20

STARSKY AND HUTCH

Daily 7:20 9:20 Sat/Sun 1:20 3:20

HIDALGO

Violence. Daily 6:50 Sat/Sun 1:10 3:40

CINEPLEX ODEON CINEMAS

5000-50 Street 432-2020

CINEMA GUIDE

5000-50 Street 432-2020

CITY CENTRE

1000-50 Street 432-2020

THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST

English subtitles. Brutal and gory violence, disturbing content. Daily 12:40 3:40 6:30 9:30

HIDALGO

Violence. Daily 12:30 3:30 6:40 9:40

STARSKY AND HUTCH

Daily 1:10 4:20 7:40 10:20

SECRET WINDOW

Violence. Daily 1:20 4:30 7:20 10:00

AGENT CODY BANKS 2: DESTINATION LONDON

Daily 1:50 4:10 7:05

SPARTAN

Violence, coarse language. Daily 9:45

THE SNOW WALKER

Some coarse language. Daily 12:50 3:20 6:50 9:20

TAKING LIVES

Violence. Daily 1:40 4:40 7:10 9:50

DAWN OF THE DEAD

Gory violence throughout. No passes. Daily 1:30 4:00 7:30 10:10

ETERNAL SUNSHINE OF THE SPOTLESS MIND

Coarse language. Daily 1:00 3:50 7:00 9:50

WEST MALL 8

9882-170 St. 444-1629

LOVE ACTUALLY

Sexual content. Fri Mon-Thu 6:40 9:20 Sat-Sun 1:30 4:00 6:40 9:20

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

Violence. Fri Mon-Thu 7:30 Sat-Sun 2:30 7:30

ALONG CAME POLLY

Crude content. Fri Mon-Thu 7:10 9:35 Sat-Sun 2:00 4:30 7:10 9:35

BROKEN LIZARD'S CLUB DREAD

Gory scenes, sexual content. Fri Mon-Thu 6:50 9:00 Sat-Sun 1:50 4:20 6:50 9:00

BIG FISH

Not recommended for young children. Fri Mon-Thu 6:35 9:10 Sat-Sun 1:20 3:50 6:35 9:10

MASTERS AND COMMANDERS: THE FAR SIDE OF THE WORLD

Violence. Fri Mon-Thu 6:30 9:15 Sat-Sun 2:10 4:30 7:20 9:15

YOU GOT SERVED

Fri Mon-Thu 7:20 9:40 Sat-Sun 2:10 4:40 7:20 9:40

CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN

Fri Mon-Thu 7:00 9:30 Sat-Sun 1:40 4:10 7:00 9:30

CLAREVIEW

421-50 Street 432-2020

LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING

Violence, frightening scenes. Daily 7:20

50 FIRST DATES

Crude content. Fri-Sun 1:20 3:35 6:50 9:10 Mon-Thu 3:35 6:50 9:10

CONFESSIONS OF A TEENAGE DRAMA QUEEN

Fri-Sun 1:00 4:00 7:00 10:00 Mon-Thu 3:00 5:10

THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST

English subtitles. Brutal and gory violence, disturbing content. Fri-Sun 1:00 4:00 7:00 10:00 Mon-Thu 4:00 7:00 10:00

STARSKY AND HUTCH

Violence, coarse language. Fri-Sun 1:30 3:55 6:30 9:00 Mon-Thu 3:55 6:30 9:00

DIRTY DANCING: HAVANA NIGHTS

Daily 9:20

STARSKY AND HUTCH

Fri-Sun 12:35 2:55 5:15 7:40 10:10 Mon-Thu 2:55 5:15 7:40 10:10

HIDALGO

Violence. Fri-Sun 12:25 3:25 6:45 9:40 Mon-Thu 3:25 6:45 9:40

SECRET WINDOW

Violence. Fri-Sun 12:45 3:45 6:50 7:30 9:50 Mon-Thu 3:05 5:20 7:30 9:50

AGENT CODY BANKS 2: DESTINATION LONDON

Fri-Sun 12:15 2:45 5:00 7:05 Mon-Thu 2:45 5:00 7:05

TAKING LIVES

Violence. Fri-Sun 1:10 3:45 7:10 9:30 Mon-Thu 3:45 7:10 9:30

DAWN OF THE DEAD

Gory violence throughout. No passes. Fri-Sun 12:55 3:15 5:30 7:50 10:15 Mon-Thu 3:15 5:30 7:50 10:15

SOUTH EDMONTON COMMON

1000-50 Street 432-2020

LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING

Violence, frightening scenes. Daily 12:20 4:30 8:45

MONSTER

Sexual violence, coarse language. Daily 1:50 4:40 7:20 10:10

50 FIRST DATES

Crude content. Daily 2:00 4:50 7:40 10:00

THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST

English subtitles. Brutal and gory violence, disturbing content. Daily 12:00 1:00 3:00 4:00 6:30 9:30

HIDALGO

Violence. Daily 12:30 3:40 6:45 9:50

STARSKY AND HUTCH

Daily 12:45 1:45 3:15 4:45 5:45 7:15 8:15 9:40 10:40

SECRET WINDOW

Violence. Fri-Sun 12:10 1:30 2:50 3:50 5:20 6:50 7:50 9:20 10:20 Mon-Thu 1:30 2:50 3:50 5:20 7:50 10:20

SPARTAN

Violence, coarse language. Fri-Sun 12:50 3:45 7:30 10:15 Sat-Sun 12:50 3:45 10:15

TAKING LIVES

Violence. Daily 12:15 2:45 5:15 7:45 10:30

DAWN OF THE DEAD

Gory violence throughout. No passes. Daily 12:40 1:40 3:10 4:10 5:40 7:10 8:10 9:45 10:45

ETERNAL SUNSHINE OF THE SPOTLESS MIND

Coarse language. Daily 1:10 4:20 7:00 9:35 Sat-Sun 12:10 1:10 4:20 7:00 9:35

THE CORPORATION

Daily 1:20 5:00 8:30

THE GIRL NEXT DOOR

Sexual content. Sneak preview Sat 7:30

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WEST MALL 6

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BROTHER BEAR

Sat-Sun 2:00 5:50

THE HAUNTED MANSION

Frightening scenes. Fri Mon-Thu 7:20 9:15 Sat-Sun 2:10 4:30 7:20 9:15

PAYCHECK

Violence. Daily 9:20

PETER PAN

Fri Mon-Thu 6:50 Sat-Sun 1:50 4:15 6:50

THE LAST SAMURAI

Gory scenes. Fri Mon-Thu 6:30 9:30 Sat-Sun 2:30 6:30 9:30

THE BIG BOUNCE

Coarse language. Daily 9:00

TEACHER'S PET

Fri Mon-Thu 7:10 Sat-Sun 1:30 4:00 7:10

SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE

Coarse language, sexual content. Fri Mon-Thu 7:00 9:40 Sat-Sun 1:40 4:20 7:00 9:40

TORQUE

Violence. Daily 6:40 8:50

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LORD OF THE RINGS: THE RETURN OF THE KING

Violence, frightening scenes. Daily 8:30

50 FIRST DATES

Crude content. Fri-Sun 1:20 3:35 6:40 9:05 Mon-Thu 3:35 6:40 9:05

CONFESSIONS OF A TEENAGE DRAMA QUEEN

Fri-Sun 1:00 4:00 7:00 10:00 Mon-Thu 3:00 5:10

THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST

English subtitles. Brutal and gory violence, disturbing content. Fri-Sun 1:00 4:00 7:00 10:00 Mon-Thu 4:00 7:00 10:00

STARSKY AND HUTCH

Violence, coarse language. Daily 10:05

CONFESSIONS OF A TEENAGE DRAMA QUEEN

Fri-Sun 12:50 3:45 6:50 9:50 Mon-Thu 3:45 6:50 9:50

MIRACLE

Fri-Sun 12:50 3:45 6:50 9:50 Mon-Thu 3:45 6:50 9:50

AGENT CODY BANKS 2: DESTINATION LONDON

Fri-Sun 11:15 4:10 7:20 9:40 Mon-Thu 7:20 9:40

LOVE, SEX AND EATING THE BONES

Sexual content. Fri Sat-Sun 1:00 4:00 7:10 9:55 Mon-Thu 7:10 9:55

STARSKY AND HUTCH

Fri 12:50 3:50 7:00 9:50 Sat-Sun 1:10 4:15 7:20 9:30

HIDALGO

Violence. Daily 3:00 6:45 9:45 Sat-Sun 12:00 3:00 6:45 9:45 Mon-Thu 6:45 9:45

SECRET WINDOW

Violence. Fri 4:00 6:50 9:50 Sat-Sun 1:00 4:00 6:50 9:50 Mon-Thu 6:50 9:50

AGENT CODY BANKS 2: DESTINATION LONDON

Fri 2:55 5:05 Sat-Sun 12:30 2:55 7:05 Mon-Thu 7:05

STARSKY AND HUTCH

12:00 2:30 5:00 7:20 10:10

HIDALGO

Violence. 12:30 3:45 6:50 9:45

NASCAR 3D: THE MAX EXPERIENCE

12:30 2:15 4:00 6:00 7:30 9:00 10:30

TAKING LIVES

Violence. Fri Sat-Sun Mon-Thu 12:55 3:30 7:20 10:30 Wed 1:00 3:30 7:30 10:30 Cinemas Wed 1pm

DAWN OF THE DEAD

No passes. Gory violence throughout. 1:15 4:20 7:15 10:15

ETERNAL SUNSHINE OF THE SPOTLESS MIND

Coarse language. 12:10 3:40 7:10 10:20

SECRET WINDOW

Violence. 1:40 4:40 7:40 10:20

AGENT CODY BANKS 2: DESTINATION LONDON

12:50 3:50 7:25

GIRL NEXT DOOR

Sexual content. Special sneak preview. Sat 7:30

WESTMOUNT CENTRE

Riddle me this

Mike Slek

Enigma Variations has a ridiculous premise and a profound message

By PAUL MATWYCHUK

It's tempting to write off a lot of what happens in Eric-Emmanuel Schmitt's play *Enigma Variations*

as little more than high-toned hogwash. The main character, Abel Znorko, is a wild creation—he's a Nobel Prize-winning author who lives in self-imposed isolation a baroque mansion on a remote island in the Norwegian Sea. (His home might initially seem much larger than it needs to be, but I suppose he needs several extra rooms just to house his gigantic ego.) He's just published a steamy epistolary

novel that critics worldwide have universally declared to be his masterpiece, and for elusive reasons of his own he's granted a rare inter-

REVUE THEATRE

view to a small-time journalist named Erik Larsen, who has secret reasons all his own for making the voyage to Casa Znorko. For the next 90 minutes, the two men engage in a battle of wits; at first, the viper-tongued, mercurial Znorko appears to have the upper hand, but don't you underestimate Larsen, because he's got a series of bombshell revelations up his sleeve that knock Znorko against the ropes at regular half-hour intervals.

I don't know if I believed a moment of this stuff—the independently wealthy, reclusive genius in his fortress of solitude; Znorko's

laboriously eloquent banter ("The more you churn out your sad little columns, the more you dribble out your etiolated syntax, the more you copy, and recopy, report and rehash the world, the more you have become the cripples of creativity! I don't report—I create!"); the increasingly crazy plot twists surrounding the true identity of the woman Znorko's book was inspired by. Add a physical gag or two and you could mistake it for something Stewart Lemoine might have written in his *Vile Governess* mode—Schmitt even uses a piece of classical music, Elgar's *Enigma Variations*, as a Lemoinian central metaphor.

And yet the ideas Schmitt raises with this rather preposterous dramatic situation are genuinely thought-provoking. Is it possible to live with someone for more than a decade and still have no idea who they really are? What if the same person shared their innermost thoughts with you over the same amount of time—would you still be equally ignorant about them when your time was up? Who's to say which part of a person is "realer"—their thoughts or their actions? Do you find out more about a person by fucking them or philosophizing with them? And can you truly be said to love someone if one half of them is all you know?

OF COURSE, Schmitt doesn't so much suggest these themes as have Znorko and Larsen come right out and debate them for us, but he (and translator Jerome Sams) find lively, savagely funny ways for the two men to express their points of view, especially when they argue the merits of living with a woman for years versus staying away from her forever. "You kid yourself," Znorko says, "that your strength is in some sort of animal proximity, like two cows in a barn, but everyday life doesn't break down the barriers or bridge the distance. On the contrary, it builds invisible walls, walls of glass which

get thicker and thicker as year turns into year, making a prison where you can always see the other person but never reach them." Schmitt has a great knack for arguing ideas by pitting them against their mirror reflections: when Larsen says, "It's only when you don't love life that you invoke the sublime," Znorko replies, "And it's only when you don't love the sublime that you get bogged down in real life!"

John Sproule gives a whirlwind performance as Znorko that's perhaps at its most likable when Znorko is at his most pompous and condescending. Sproule has always excelled at playing well-spoken speechifiers and so it's not surprising that he has little trouble handling the play's early scenes; what's most notable about Sproule's work here is that the script requires him on no fewer than three occasions to react to world-shattering surprises, and that he manages to do so convincingly all three times without ever once repeating himself.

David McNally's Larsen at times quivers a bit too much with indignation, but his smaller-than-life characterization makes him a good foil for Sproule and perhaps some of the extremes of McNally's performance make sense in the context of Larsen's final revelation. *Enigma Variations'* intellectual male head games couldn't be more different from Marianne Copithorne's previous directorial effort, Judith Thompson's turbulent "women's play" *Perfect Pie*, but Copithorne finds plenty of natural ways to keep Schmitt's talky script emotionally alive and physically active. How she managed to make something this watchable and even profound out of material this silly and yet self-serious may be the biggest enigma of them all. ●

ENIGMA VARIATIONS

Directed by Marianne Copithorne •

Written by Eric-Emmanuel Schmitt •

Starring John Sproule and David McNally

• Varscona Theatre • 434-5564



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The men commandments

Shelley Rothenburger deconstructs male-targeted ads in *Physique*

By AGNIESZKA MATEJKO

Are you always hot in bed? Do you outperform? Command power? Respect? Are your abs to die for? Does your car make heads spin? Can you fix my computer? My car? At least an appliance? According to artist Shelly Rothenburger, these are some of the exaggerated expectations and downright abusive questions that advertisements impose on men. But unlike women who have been "bitching" for years about the insane images of anorexic idols on magazine covers, you rarely hear men object to these inflated ideals,

impossible for any normal, healthy and attractive male to meet.

Once Rothenburger realized the outrageously impossible pressures put onto men, she decided to do something about it. "I know so many good men in my life," explains Rothenburger. "I see them as real people first." To make her point, Rothenburger took the stacks of drawings she had made of nude male models and scribbled slogans

REVUE VISUAL ARTS

over top of them from the most offensive ads she could find in men's magazines, flyers and popular media. The resulting show, *Physique: What Kind of Man Are You?*, became a one-woman tongue-in-cheek way of giving men the long-overdue right to step down from the superhero podium and be... well, just people.

Rothenburger wasn't always a political artist. She started out like nearly every would-be painter, doing humourless, ever-so-important art. One day, however, a fellow graduate student commented, "You've got to lighten up," and it was as if a light had been switched on. "I started to become more and more interested in humour," she explains, "and how that can get your point across as well as something that has a lot of dark drama."

Around the time she glanced at a flyer that appeared in her mailbox: "Respect is just around the corner," read the ad, which was targeted at male consumers. "It slapped me in the face," Rothenburger exclaims. "I couldn't believe it—it was such blatant advertising. 'You need our product to have other men respect you.' [The ad] assumed they were not respected already." Rothenburger scanned through other men's magazines to see what

The man with the golden farm

Rod Beattie skates back to Persephone County with *Wingfield on Ice*

By PAUL MATWYCHUK

In the 18 years since *Letter From Wingfield Farm* premiered in 1985, actor Rod Beattie has amassed more than 3,000 performances as self-deprecating Walt Wingfield, the former stockbroker who traded in his pin-stripe suit for a pair of overalls and reinvented himself as a farmer in Persephone County. *Wingfield on Ice*, in which Walt attempts to resolve a couple of bitter local feuds while he and his wife Maggie await the birth of their first child, is the fifth installment in the *Wingfield* series, and once again Beattie plays every single character—young, old, male, female and canine. Performing these plays is almost as regular a task for Beattie as milking the cows would be for a farmer, but as I talked to Beattie last week about the process of developing a *Wingfield* show, it was obvious that he hardly regards it as a chore.

Vue Weekly: So much of the appeal of these plays lies in the idea that country life is a little purer or more honest than city life—or at least that Walt feels more spiritually fulfilled on the farm. But with this play, there's the suggestion that the country is kind of a breeding ground for feuds and lifelong family arguments.

Rod Beattie: Oh, I don't think so. It's not so much that life is purer in the country; I think the difference is that they face the consequences of their attitudes and actions on a more constant, day-to-day basis. You don't

ads were actually telling men; what she found shocked her. The ads gnawed at men's self-esteem, insinuating that they needed to buy something to improve their flagging performance in bed, in the office, in the athletic arena.

MEANWHILE, Rothenburger was regularly attending life drawing sessions for artists and creating numerous sketches. Her male models stood in the nude, surrounded by a circle of mostly female artists. "What would happen if I took drawings of real individuals and juxtaposed them with popular media stereotypes?" she wondered and began scribbling belligerent slogans from magazines above her vulnerable, self-doubting and all-too-human drawings of men. "Many mistakes are forgivable; buying the wrong exhaust system isn't," chastises an

live anonymously in the country—you can't keep a secret life in that kind of community. Now, one possibility to cope with that is to live a blameless life. But that's not an option for most of us, so we have to find some other way. This play is very much about finding realistic ways to deal with that reality.

VW: How real and specific have

PREVIEW THEATRE

these characters become in your mind? Do you have a picture in your mind of what they all look like?

RB: I sort of do. When I'm onstage with them, I sort of see them. It's not a hologram or a ghost, but I do see a sort of essence of them—and



Rod Beattie

it's quite vivid.... Of course, they usually start off having human models—real-life people that Dan and I will sort of base them on, and I'll often start by trying to conjure the image of that person. But one of the odd

automotive magazine. "Get abs like these and women may want to start using you for your body," advises a fitness quarterly. "Every record I set is another one I have to break," recommends *Sports Illustrated*. "You have the power. Now go make something happen," urges an ad in

things that happens is that over time, the human model recedes and the character becomes their own model. With some of the characters who've been in the plays from the beginning, I can scarcely remember the people they're based on.

VW: Are there any types of characters that present a particular challenge for you? Is it any trickier, for instance, to do women compared to men?

RB: I don't think so. I mean, they're all hard—acting's hard. For a long time, Maggie was the hardest for me, partly because she didn't have a human model; she was always just herself and so I never had a shortcut to get to her. But I've also found over the years—and I wouldn't have expected this when I started—that a gender difference isn't any greater challenge than any other physical difference.

VW: Have the scripts ever posed too great a challenge for you—a character you could never get a handle on or a scene with more characters in it than you could handle?

RB: Well, not yet—touch wood. Actually, I'm usually the one who wants to push the limits that way. I can remember with the third play, *Wingfield's Folly*, saying that it would be nice to try a scene in which a number of characters would react to something without saying anything, and to see if the audience could follow it. After two plays, I'd found that we'd drastically underestimated the audience's ability, and their taste for, this kind of imagination. Now we always want to blow the audience's expectations apart. ☺

WINGFIELD ON ICE

Directed by Douglas Beattie • Written by Dan Needles • Starring Rod Beattie • Shocter Theatre, The Citadel • To Apr 4 • 425-1820

delight, she found herself surrounded at her opening by men eager to discuss these issues. "They talked about the pressures, about the ideal," she says. "They feel it too and they are pressured as much as women. For men it's power, it's strength, even violence, what you have—your financial status is really important, your sexual prowess, how good you are in bed." When her boyfriend (who rarely talks to her about her art) became excited about the show, Rothenburger knew she had touched a nerve. "It dealt with things that we all have to deal with in present society," she says. "Men don't want all that pressure. None of us do." ☺

PHYSIQUE: WHAT KIND OF MAN ARE YOU?
By Shelley Rothenburger • Fringe Gallery • To Mar 31

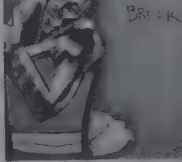
MANY MISTAKES ARE FORGIVABLE. BUYING THE WRONG EXHAUST SYSTEM ISN'T.



ABSOLUTE FUCKING GENIUS - BEYOND GENIUS AND OUT THE OTHER SIDE



EVERY RECORD I SET IS ANOTHER ONE I HAVE TO BREAK



Maxim. "He plays up and fires hard," reads an NHL hockey computer game. Meanwhile GQ just puts all men into one big inadequate lump: "There are 3,144,648,877 men roaming the earth. Only 16 have what it takes to be men of the year."

At first, Rothenburger worried that men might think that her pieces were making fun of them. But to her

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catalyst theatre presents

The Blue Orphan

A musical epic by Jonathan Christenson / Joey Tremblay
Recipient of the 2003 Sterling Award for outstanding new work

March 13th - March 21st

Hello from Australia!

FINAL SHOW
MARCH 21ST

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theatre notes

By PAUL MATWYCHUK

Blue crush

Blue Orphan • Catalyst Theatre (8529 Gateway Blvd) • To Mar 21
reVUE I thought Jonathan Christenson and Joey Tremblay's musical fable *The Blue Orphan* was the best play of 2002—and I have an old, yellowing "year in review" issue of *Vue Weekly* to prove it. The show is obviously a favourite of the company as well; Catalyst Theatre presented it at the 2002 Edinburgh Fringe Festival, and they're currently in the middle of a new world tour that will take *The Blue Orphan* to cities as remote as Adelaide, Australia and Kitchener, Ontario before it's done.

This version of the show has been slightly rewritten and recast. Chris Fassbender replaces Michael Scholar Jr. as Jonah, the seemingly omniscient orphan boy who narrates the play and introduces audiences to its vast cast of characters. (He's like the Stage Manager in *Our Town*, and the crumbling industrial town of Crooked Creek is sort of Christenson and Tremblay's version of Grover's Corners.) Clinton Carew, not Tremblay, now plays Ormand ("the Brute"), a disfigured violinist still tormented by the loss of his mistreated wife, a singer named Papillon; and Coralie Cairns replaces Julianna Barclay as paper-mill heiress Henrietta Sinclair, a Mrs. Havisham-like crone who's allowed the city's chief industry to fall into ruin. Barclay, meanwhile, has stepped into Siân Williams's shoes, or lack thereof, as the feisty dreamer Barefoot Claire.

Fassbender (who looks startlingly like a youthful version of Jonathan Christenson) plays Jonah as more of an

innocent than Scholar did—Scholar's Jonah had a heavier spirit to him, as if he knew none of these characters' lives would turn out happily. Fassbender, however, seems to take comfort in the rare moments of hope and human connection he witnesses—the final image of this production is of Fassbender smiling back at the audience as he walks into the sunlight. And yet, at the same time, there's a more pronounced element of the grotesque to this version of the show; the actors' makeup (especially on Cairns and Christenson) seems even paler and more corpse-like than I remember it being back in 2002. Sheri Somerville's singing, meanwhile, is lovelier and sadder than ever.

A couple of the returning performances have become broader, or at least more loudly miked, than my memory of them—Harvey Anderson makes the nun Sister Pamela into even more of a soured battleaxe, while Kevin Corey (wearing a nappy wig that makes him look like the keyboard player from *School of Rock*) whips himself into an even greater froth of nerdy timidity as one of Pamela's charges, a young butterfly fancier named Harold.

But the heart of the show remains the tender relationship between the forlorn Jim Tibue (Christenson) and Hortense (Beth Graham), a Pollyannaish street vendor who makes it her mission to lift Jim's spirits. These scenes come terrifyingly close to being nothing but maudlin, sentimental claptrap, but instead there's something so pure and delicate about the writing and Christenson and Graham's performances that they seem fragile and beautiful instead—they hit you on the same level of helpless, almost embarrassing emotion as, say, the final scene of Charles Chaplin's *City Lights* or the last half-hour of *Dancer in the Dark*.

The rest of the play has undergone

some nips and tucks (including a clarified, more upbeat ending), but it's still the same magical experience I remember undergoing nearly two years ago. It's nice to know that so many theatres around the world will be giving this *Orphan* a good home.

Here endeth the lessons

Do children ever get fed up with being taught a message every time they go to the theatre? That's what I was wondering after attending two children's plays this weekend, both of which seemed to have started out with lessons they wanted to teach instead of stories they wanted to tell.



"Be good to the environment" is the token message underlying Garner Butler's *Little Green Riding Hood* (which runs until March 21 at the Arts Barns). Amber Borotsik plays Lilly, an nature-loving little girl who finds a magical mask that lets her talk to animals and eagerly ventures into a tropical jungle to look for adventure. Unfortunately, Butler's underwritten script doesn't give Lilly anything interesting to do once she gets there except listen to a howler monkey (Sheldon Elter) tell her terrible jokes, or have a haughty parrot (Belinda Cornish) repeatedly instruct her to "follow your intuition." Borotsik is a likable performer who never condescends to her character, but she's been given

nothing to play—no real conflict, no growth, no personality quirks.

It's the cardboard villain played by Andrew McCreedy who gets the only character arc—he starts out as an evil, profiteering developer but after spending a couple of hours in the jungle decides to call off the bulldozers and build a nature preserve for rare animal species and endangered hardwoods. His journey to enlightenment is laboriously padded out with overlong dance routines and lots of lame slapstick—poor McCreedy even has to do a bit where he loses his pants and gets chased around the stage in his boxer shorts. Roger Schultz contributes an impressively lush jungle set, but I doubt that this well-intentioned but uninspired and awkwardly staged production will win over many kids to the ecological cause.

Equally message-y but much more fun and theatrically inventive is Dennis Foon's *New Canadian Kid* (which runs until March 21 at the Citadel). Tolerance of people from other cultures is what's being taught in this one—that's a familiar TYA theme, but Foon employs a clever, unconventional gimmick that forces kids to immediately identify with Nick (Shomee Chakrabarty), the character who's the least like themselves. Nick's family has emigrated to Canada from their native "Homeland," and when he shows up for his first day of school, Foon dramatizes his confusion by having his Canadian classmates speak all their lines in a gibberish language that's sort of a cross between Ubba-Dubba, Klingon and Esperanto. ("Canada," for instance, is called "Snowdada" and instead of "no" and "yes," people say "nix" and "fer-sure!")

We get the hang of this nonsense language at about the same rate that Nick begins making friends and assimilating into Canadian culture; we feel the same sense of accomplishment as he does when he figures out what his

new girlfriend (Medina Hahn) is trying to tell him. Foon's portrayal of the immigrant experience isn't entirely rosy, though—Nick's mother (Linda Grass) finds herself isolated in her new country because of her inability to speak English, and Nick keeps getting picked on by Mug (Chris Boulough), a racist bully in his class at school.

Foon scrambles unconvincingly in the play's final minutes to have everything culminate in a happy ending, but that's forgivable. The rest of the play ingeniously finesses the question of how to teach kids a message without preaching to them—as they concentrate on deciphering all of that gibberish dialogue, Foon's anti-racist message just might sneak in under the radar.

Stewart literature

The official launch for *A Teatrol Trilogy* (NeWest Press), the new collection of three of the most beloved plays by Edmonton's master of bittersweet whimsy Stewart Lemoine, takes place at the Varsona Theatre on Sunday, March 21 at 7:30 p.m.

But the book is already available in stores, and it's well worth picking up—Lemoine's literate, playful dialogue translates unusually well to the page, and it's nearly as much fun to read plays like *Shockers Delight!*, *Pith!* and *The Margin of the Sky* as it is to watch them performed. (You can even read them aloud to yourself and pretend that you're Jeff Haslam.) It's also nice to be able to pause and linger over magical speeches like Julia's disquisition on the appeal of golf from *Shockers Delight!* or the remarkably moving explanation of the titular phrase that Leo delivers in the final moments of *The Margin of the Sky*.

Still, the launch party on Sunday night is a perfect opportunity for bookworms to get out of the house and mingle. The evening will be hosted by Susanna Patchouli, refreshments will be served and excerpts from the three plays will be performed by their original cast members, including Ron Pedersen, Jeff Haslam and Davina Stewart. Shockers delight! ☺

ARTS WEEKLY

Fax your free listings to 426-2889 or e-mail them to listings@vue.ab.ca. Deadline is Friday at 3pm.

DANCE

THE LITTLE HOUSE DANCE PROJECT | 8 Little Brichouse 10004-90 St (424-1573) • Presented by Mile Zero Dance. Choreography by Gerry Motta • Mar. 18-21 (8pm) • \$12 (adv)/\$15 (door)

RODA DE CAPOEIRA The Capoeira Academy, 6807-104 St (709-3500) www.capeiraedmonton.ca • A free performance of a Brazilian mix of dance, martial arts and percussion • Every Sat (2-3pm)

VOLYA URRAINIAN DANCE ENSEMBLE Victoria School, (908-5271) • With Regina's Tavna • Sat, Mar. 27 (7-30pm) • \$10 (adv)/\$12 (door)

GALLERIES/MUSEUMS

ALBERTA CRAFT COUNCIL GALLERY 10186-106 St (488-6317/4808-5900) • Open Mar. Sat. 10am-5pm, Thu 10am-5pm (closed all holidays) • **WIND CHILL -40 C OR WINTER UNDERLAND** Members mixed media show; until Mar. 27 • **Discovery Gallery: RAGS TO RUCS** Fabric artworks by Cassa Cameron Matthews; until Apr. 3

ART BEAT GALLERY 26 St. Anne St. St. Albert (459-3679) • Landscape pastel artworks by Leopold • Until Mar. 19

ARTSHAB STUDIO GALLERY 3rd Floor, Knoll Building, 10217-106 St (423-2966) • Open Thu 5-8pm or by appointment • Artworks by Ryan Brown, Jeff Collins, Aaron Pederson, Tim Rechner, Paul Roberts, Gabriela Rosende,

Greg Swain, Anna Szul, Eugene Uluad and guests

LEVIN'S UPSTAIRS GALLERY 10116-106 St (424-1573) • **BOOY AND SOUL** Artworks by Herman Poulin, Gilles Comtois, Annette Ayre, Terrance Pampin • Until Mar. 24

CHRISTEL BERGSTROM'S RED GALLERY 9621-82 Ave (439-8210) • Open Mon-Fri 11am-5pm • **A VIEW TO UNDERSTANDING** Portraits by Christel Bergstrom • **DEAD DOGMA SERIES** Colour studies by Christel Bergstrom • Through March • Opening reception: Sat, Mar. 20 (noon-6pm)

DOUGLAS UDELL GALLERY 10332-124 St (488-4445) • **STREETSCAPES** Artworks by Danny Singer • Until Mar. 20

EDMONTON ART GALLERY 2 Sir Winston Churchill Sq (422-6223) • Open Tue-Wed and 10:30am-5pm; Thu 10:30am-8pm; Sat, Sun 11am-5pm. Closed Mon • **MAXWELL BATES: AT THE CROSSROADS OF EXPRESSIONISM** Until Apr. 18 • Ken Macklin; until June 6 • **FIELD NOTES** Artworks by the O'Flanagan brothers; until June 6 • **ART FOR LUNCH: EAG Theatre**; Thu, Mar. 25 • **ART 101: EXPRESSIONISM: A TO Z**, lecture presented by Dr. Steven Harris; Thu, Mar. 18 (7pm) • **Kitchen Gallery: TODAY TRACE** A multimedia installation by Lyndal Osborne and John Freeman; until June 6 • **Children's Gallery: SLEEP/BOUND**; until Jan. 2005 • \$12 (adult)/\$10 (student/senior), \$5 (children 6-12)/free (member/children 5 and under)

ELECTRUM DESIGN STUDIO 12419 Stoney Plain Rd (482-1402) • Open Tue-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 10am-6pm • **TUNING A NEW PAGE** Artworks by Mason Ebyen • **MOORE FELTED LANDSCAPES** Artworks by Myrna Harris • Until Mar. 28

EXTENSION CENTRE GALLERY 2nd Fl University

Extension Centre, 8303-112 St (492-3034) • Open Mon-Thu 8:30am-8pm; Fri 9:30am-4:30pm; Sat 9am-noon • Graduating Student Exhibition • Mar. 22-31

FAB GALLERY Room 1-1, Fine Arts Building, 112 St. 89 Ave, U of A Campus (492-2081) • Open Tue-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 2pm-5pm • **THE ALCUIN AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN BOOK DESIGN IN CANADA 2002** • Until Mar. 27

FORT DOOR 10108-81 Ave (432-7535) • Open Mon-Wed 10am-6pm; Thu-Fri 10am-9pm; Sat 10am-6pm; Sun 12-5pm • Eskimo soapstone carvings, mukluks by B. Shvurapik. West Coast Indian and Eskimo silver and gold jewellery by M. Talio • Through March

FRUNGE GALLERY Bsm 10516 Whyte Ave (432-0240) • Open Mon-Sat 9:30am-6pm • **PHYSIQUE** Mixed media artworks by Shelley Rothenberger • Through March

GALLERY DE JONGE 27022A Hwy 16A, Spruce Grove (962-9505) • Open Tue-Sun 11-5pm, anytime by appointment • Work by local artists Beth Coules, Earl Cummins, Henry de Jager and Mary Masters

GIORDANO GALLERY 10080 Jasper Ave (429-5066) • **SPRING SHOW 2004** Variety of artworks by Canadian artists • Mar. 20-Apr. 21 • Opening reception: Sat, Mar. 20

HARCOURT HOUSE 10215-112 St (426-4180) • Open Mon-Fri 10am-5pm; Sat 12-4pm • **TERRANCE** Artworks by Jeffrey Burns • Until Mar. 20 • **INCARNATION: Photographs** by Vancouver artist Susan Bozic; Mar. 25-May 1, opening reception: Mar. 25 (7-10pm) • **Front Room: FROM THE INSIDE OUT** Artworks by Tandy McLeod; Mar. 25-May 1; opening reception: Mar. 25 (7-10pm)

JEFF ALLEN ART GALLERY Strathcona Place Senior Centre, 10831 University Ave (438-5807) • Open Mon-Fri 9am-4pm • Pen and ink artworks by James Greengough • Until Apr. 1

JOHNSON GALLERY 7711-85 St (465-6171) • Open: Mon-Fri 9am-5:30pm; Sat 9am-5pm • Artworks by various artists • Through March

JOHNSON GALLERY 11817-80 St (479-8424) • Open

Mon-Fri 9:30am-5:30pm; Sat 9:30am-4pm • Artworks by Jim Brager; Don Sharpe, prints by Toit, pottery by Noboru Kubo • Through March

MANULIFE PLACE www.dovebyond.com/canada (416-923-0066) • **BEYOND COMPARE: WOMEN PHOTOGRAPHERS OF BEAUTY** Photographs featuring images of beauty of renowned female photographers around the world • Mar. 20-29

MCPEG MULTICULTURAL PUBLIC ART GALLERY 5411-15 St, Stony Plain (963-2777) • Open 10am-4pm • Paintings by Sophia Podryhula • Until Apr. 6 • Opening reception: Sun, Mar. 21 (1-3:30pm)

MUSE HERITAGE MUSEUM 5 St. Anne Street, St. Albert (459-1528) • Open Mon-Sat 10am-5pm; Sun 1-5pm • **INKUSUK: IF STONES COULD SPEAK** Until Apr. 18

PROFILES PUBLIC ART GALLERY 19 Perron Street, St. Albert (460-4310) • Open Tue-Sat 10-5pm; Thu 10am-8pm • **THE SPEEDING SUBJECT**: A group exhibition of paintings and drawings featuring Mary Joyce; until Apr. 10 • **ARTVENTURES**: For children ages 5-12; Sat, Mar. 20; \$2/chld

PROVINCIAL MUSEUM OF ALBERTA 12845-102 Ave (453-9100) • Open: Sat-Sun 10am-5pm, Fri 9am-9pm • **THROUGH THE EYE OF THE NEEDLE** Embroidery traditions and high craftsmanship of women from Gujarat, India; opens March 27 • **IN THE SHADOW OF VOLCANOES**: Indonesian artworks; opens March 27 • **BIG THINGS 2**: Featuring large-scale sculptures by the artists of the North Edmonton Sculpture Workshop; until Apr. 30 • **SYNCRUDE CANADA ABORIGINAL PEOPLES GALLERY**: Spans 11,000 years and 500 generations, people of the past and present, recordings, film, lights, artifacts and more. Permanent exhibit • **Spotlight Gallery: EVERY MOTHER'S FEAR** ALBERTA POLICE EXPERIENCE; until Sept. 12 • **Orientation Gallery: ALBERTA NATURESCAPES**: Photographs by Michael Ciesworth; until Apr. 20 • **The Natural History Gallery** • **BIG ROOM**: Live Invertebrate display. Permanent exhibit • **THE BIRD GALLERY**: Mountain birds. Permanent exhibit • **TREASURES OF THE EARTH**:

Geology collection. Permanent exhibit • **WILD ALBERTA GALLERY**: Permanent exhibit • **A TO Z AT THE MUSEUM** Every Sat (9am-11pm): family-fun drop-in program. P for Picky Eaters!, Mar. 20; Q for Questions, Questions, Questions!, Mar. 27 • **SPECIAL WILD ALBERTA PRESENTATIONS**: Aquarium (963-2777) • **Mar. 20-21, 27-28** (1pm and 2pm) • **PRESENTATION**: In the Field Alberto's Grasslands with Lindsay Torrey; Sun, Mar. 28 (2:30pm)

RED STRAP ART MARKET 10305-97 St (497-2211) • Open Sun 11am-5pm • Variety of artists and artisans

RICOLETTO'S CAFE 10068-108 St • **AIDA TO ZAZA**: Featuring artworks by various artists • Until Apr. 30

ROWLES AND COMPANY 10130-103 St (426-4035) • Glassworks by several B.C. and Alberta artists including Mark Cibeau, Arte Vargas and Marcia de Vique. Paintings by Angela Grotzke, Lisi Legge and Kathryn Sherman • **Hotel MacDonald**: Acrylic paintings by Steve Mitts • **Oxford Tower Lobby**: Oil paintings by David Plummer • **Scottie Place Lobby**: Watercolours by Frances Alt-Arcott • **Bell Tower Lobby**: Paintings by Sheila Luck, Frances Alt-Arcott and Glenda Beaver. Glass art by Daniel Vargas, Mark Gibeau, Carol Jane Campbell and Marcia de Vique • Through March

SCOTT GALLERY 10411-124 St (488-3619) • Open Tue-Sat 10am-5pm • **SWEET HOME ALBERTA**: Landscape paintings by Wendy Wacko • Mar. 20-Apr. 6 • Opening reception: Sat, Mar. 20 (2-4pm)

SNAP GALLERY 10137-104 St (423-1492) • Open Tue-Sat (12-5pm) • **READING THE HOMESTEAD**: Printmaking artworks by Darlene Kalynda • Mar. 18-Apr. 17 • Opening reception: Thu, Mar. 17 (7-9pm)

SHOWBIRD GALLERY WEM, 8882-170 St (444-1024) • Work by J. Yardley-Jones and Roger Johnson, artwork by Jim Vest, pottery by Noboru Kubo and Jacqueline Stenberg

Continued from page 66

STANLEY A. MILLER LIBRARY 750 Winston Churchill Sq. Features a gallery, lower level + **SHATTERING SMILES ON AUMENT**, Paintings by Tim Rechner + Until Mar. 31 + Closing reception: Mar. 27 (2-4pm)

STOCKLEY GALLERY 9702-111 Ave. (488-0255) + Open, Mon-Thurs 10am-2pm, Sat 10am-2pm + Artworks by artists who work alongside the artists with disabilities in the Nina Huggerty Centre studio + Until Mar. 26

STUDIO 321 Rice Howard Way, 10168-100A St (424-6746) + Open Sat 1-4pm, Sun 1-4pm + **THE FATHER-SUN EXHIBIT** Artworks by Marc Munan and Louis Munan + Until Mar. 30

STUDIO GALLERY 143 Grandin Park Plaza, St. Albert (460-5900) + Open: Tue-Fri 10am-5pm, Sat 10am-4pm, or by appt + **WESTERN SPACE**: Artworks by Bruce Thompson, Doug Fraser and Bruce Allen + Until Apr. 30

YVAA GALLERY 3rd Fl, Harcourt House, 10215-112 St (421-1731) + **PRAIRIE SCAPES**: landscape paintings and drawings by Mary Wengert + Until Mar. 26

THE WORKS GALLERY Commerce Place, Main Fl, 10150-Jasper Ave (426-2122 ext. 226) + Open: Mon-Fri noon-5pm + **BELLES OF THE BALL**: Metal sculptures by Blanca Khan and Linda Maines + Until Mar. 26

LITERARY

AUDREYS BOOKS 10702 Jasper Ave (423-3487) + Carla Harfield reads from *Your Last Day on Earth* + Thu, Mar. 8 (3:30pm)

BACRUMON VODKA BAR 201, 10324-82 Ave + I Love Alberta Beat: Every poetry open stage hosted by The Alberta Beatnik + Every Tue (8pm) + Until Mar. 30

CALABASH CAFE 10630-124 St (414-6625) + Every Wed (7:30pm): *The Poet's Voice*: readings by local authors

ST. ANDREWS UNITED CHURCH 1A Fieldstone Drive, Spruce Grove + T.A.L.E.S.: Nurturing Story: Storytelling created presented by the Parkland Chapter of T.A.L.E.S. + Mar. 27 (1:30pm) + \$10 (adult/\$15 (child 12 and under), \$20 (family) + Tickets available at TX on the Square

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA Humanities Centre, L-3 + Reading by Kimmy Beatty: Mon, Mar. 22 (2pm) + Reading of *Of Manges and Tole Manes*: A Dialogue on Poetry with Lema Goodson and Ted Chamberlin: Tue, Mar. 23 (7:30pm); free + www.uofa.ca/~comp/evite.htm

THE VARSONA THEATRE Varsona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (448-0695) Launch of Stewart Lewmont's collection of humorous plays with Mark Meier, Ron Pederson and others + Mar. 21 (7:30pm)

WINSPEAR CENTRE (428-1414) + Spoken word with Henry Rollins + Wed, Mar. 24 (6:30pm) door, 7:30pm (show) + \$22.50 and \$26.50 + Tickets available at the Winspear box office

LIVE COMEDY

CELEBRATIONS THEATRE + Wayne Lee (comedic hypnosis) + Mar. 23 + \$10 (adv)/\$14 (door)

THE COMEDY FACTORY 3414 Gateway Boulevard (443-4999) + Chris Moloney: Mar. 18-20 + Comedy Harding: Mar. 25-27

FARGO'S 10307-82 Ave (433-4526) + Improv comedy + Every Sun

LEGENDS PUB 6104 172 St (481-2786) + Comedy Mondays with Yik Yiks on Tue, Jason Daniels, Tim Rainett; Mar. 15 + Matt Bilton, Paul Myrhaug: Mar. 22

RED'S WEM (481-6420) + Hypno Sundays: With hypnotist Saleh + 9:30pm + Free

THEATRE

THE BLUE ORPHAN Catalyst Theatre, 8529 Gateway Boulevard (431-1750) + Presented by Catalyst Theatre + A return engagement of Jonathan Christenson and Joey Tremblay's Sterling Award-winning multi-character musical fantasy about the unseen but intricate web of connections—including a rare singing butterfly—that ties together the inhabitants of a crumbling industrial town + Until Mar. 21 + \$21 (adult/\$16 (student)) + Tickets available at Catalyst Theatre

CHIMPOTROVI Varsona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (448-0695) + Long-form improvisational sketches performed by Rapid Fire Theatre's top improvisers + Every Sat (11pm) except Feb 24 of each month

CYRANO DE BERGERAC Waterdale Playhouse, 10322-83 Ave (439-2845/420-1257) + Alex Hawker directs Edmond Rostand's classic 1897 romance about a dashing swordsman and poet who desperately loves his beautiful cousin but, assuming no woman could ever love a man with an as physically large as his, agrees to ghostwrite a series of eloquent love letters on behalf of her more conventionally handsome suitor + Mar. 24-27, 30, Apr. 3 (8pm); Mar. 28 (2pm) + \$12-\$14 (adult)/\$10-\$12 (student/senior) + Tickets available at TX on the Square, door

THE NASTY Varsona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (448-0695) + Jeff Haslam, Stephanie Wolfe, Mark Meier, Josh Dean, Davina Swenson and Leona Barnes celebrate the 13th season of Edmonton's legendary live improvised soap opera by spoofing the '50s melodramas of Douglas Sirop and Grace Melaieus + Every Monday (8pm)

BIGMA VARIATIONS Varsona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (434-5564/420-1757) + Presented by Shadow Theatre + Marianne Cophione directs David McNally and John Spillane in Eric-Emmanuel Schmitt's drama about a reclusive Nobel Prize-winning author grants a rare interview to a journalist about his new book, only to discover that both

men share a connection with the mysterious woman who inspired it + Until Mar. 20, Tue (8pm); Mar. 21, Wed (8pm), Sun (2pm); \$15/\$12 (student/senior); Fri-Sat (8pm) \$20/\$16 (student/senior); Sat (2pm): paywhat-you-wish; Tue: \$10 (all seats); Fri, Feb 12: Two-for-One + Tickets available at TX on the Square

ESPRESSO Kassa Theatre, Jubilee Auditorium (420-1757) + Mons Erman directs Lucia Frangione (who also wrote the script) and Todd Thomson in this comedy/drama about the same, all from the perspective of the members of the same dysfunctional Italian family, who come together when a car crash threatens to take the life of the man they all love + Until Mar. 20, Tue-Sat (8pm), Fri-Sun (3pm) + \$25/\$22 (each for groups of 10 or more) + Tickets available at TX on the Square 420-1757

FIVE YEARS (5 ANS) Le Ciel Francophone, 8627-91 St (469-8400) + Presented by UniTheatre and La Troupe du Jour + Deborah Côté directs Marianne Beauchamp, Bruce McKay and Isabelle Rousseau in David Baudemont's French-language drama about two lovers on opposite sides of the Berlin Wall who are forced to confront a terrible secret when Germany is reunited + Mar. 18-20 (8pm); Mar. 21 (2pm) + \$17 (adult)/\$12 (student) + Tickets available at UniTheatre, La Librairie Le Carrefour

HARRY AND SALLY'S WEDDING Jubalions Dinner Theatre, WEM, 8627-100 St (484-2424) + Fri, Sat + Wed, Thu, Sat: \$46.95; Fri-Sat \$56.95; child (12 and under) \$20.05; senior (Med over 55) \$33.05

LITTLE GREEN RIDING HOOD Arts Barns, 10310-84 Ave (448-9000) + Presented by Fringe Theatre For Young People + The world premiere of playwright Grant Butler's multicultural and environmentally conscious retelling of the story of Little Red Riding Hood + Until Mar. 21; Mar. 19 (7pm); Mar. 20 (11am and 2pm), Mar. 21 (2pm)

LOUIS DAVID REEL: THE MUSICAL Jubilee Auditorium, 11455 87 Ave (420-1757) + Presented by the Musicalman Performing Arts Society + Paul David Mercier stars in C.W. Oley's musical biography of the controversial 19th-century Canadian politician, rebel and Meli's-nights martyr + Wed, Mar. 24 (8pm) + \$18 (main fl, adv), \$21 (door)/\$12 (first balcony, adv), \$15 (door)/\$7 (second balcony, adv), \$10 (door) + Tickets available at TX on the Square

MEASURE FOR MEASURE The Citadel, MacLach Theatre, 9828-101A Ave (425-1820) + Bob Baker directs David Storck in William Shakespeare's 1604 "problem play" about a man whose reputation for impeccable moral proves false when he is assigned by the Duke of Vienna to govern the city in his absence, and almost immediately demands that a virginal nun sleep with him in exchange for sparing her brother from a death sentence + Until Mar. 21 + Tickets available at Citadel Theatre box office

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM Timms Centre for the Arts, U of A Campus, 87, Elm St (492-2495) + Presented by Studio Theatre + Jean Stéphane Roy directs William Shakespeare's beloved romantic comedy set in a forest visited by a quartet of young Italian lovers, a host of mischievous fairies and an inept but good-hearted troupe of amateur actors + Mar. 25-Apr. 3 (8pm) Apr. 1 (12:30pm), no performances on Sundays + Tickets range from \$8-520 + Tickets available at the Timms Centre box office (noon-5pm Tue-Fri)

NEW CANADIAN IDOL The Citadel, Rice Theatre, 9828-101A Ave (425-1820) + Tracy Carroll directs Dennis Foon's off-kilter children's play about a foreign schoolteacher's efforts to adapt to the strange language and customs of a new country after his family relocates to Canada from their native "Homeland" + Until Mar. 21 + Tickets available at Citadel Theatre box office

NOEL AND GERTIE Jekyll and Hyde Pub, 10610-100 Ave (420-1757) + Presented by Image Theatre + Sheridan Morley's music-filled play explores the legendary relationship between actor/playwright/writer Noel Coward and actress Gertrude Lawrence + Mar. 23-27, Mar. 30-Apr 3 (8pm) + \$13 Tue-Thurs, \$16 Fri-Sat + Tickets available at the door, TX on the Square

OH SUSANNAH! The Varsona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave, www.varsona.com/theatre/ohsusanah + Edmonton's live Euro-style variety show, featuring games, musical numbers and celebrity interviews, all presided over by international glamour-gal Susanna Patchouli and her co-host, Eros, God of Love + Mar. 27 (11pm)

THE PIRATE GHOST OF CAPTAIN SMUG Celebrations Dinner Theatre, Oaks Entertainment Hotel, 13103 Fort Rd (448-9339) + The crew of the pirate ship *Soury Seas* sail in search of buried treasure in this swashbuckling adventure, packed with music, swordfights and mermaids + Until May 9, Wed-Sat (6:15pm), Sun (5:15pm) + Tickets range from \$34.95-\$49.95/\$20 (children 12 and under)

SHIRAZ MADNESS Mayfield Dinner Theatre, Mayfield Inn, 16615-109 Ave (483-0051) + A wacky interactive murder mystery about an Edmonton hairdresser saying that is turned upside-down when the illustrious concert pianist who lives in the apartment upstairs is murdered + Until Apr. 18

THE SYRINGA TREE The Citadel, Rice Theatre, 9828-101A Ave (425-1820) + Lisa Repo-Marcell plays 23 different roles in Pamela Glen's acclaimed one-woman comedy-of-age play, which examines life under South Africa's apartheid government through the eyes of a British girl growing up in Johannesburg during the '60s and '70s + Mar. 23-Apr. 18 + Tickets available at Citadel Theatre box office

THEATRESPORTS Varsona Theatre, 10329-83 Ave (448-0695) + Presented by Rapid Fire Theatre + Teams of improvisers create sketches on the spot based on audience suggestions, and have the results evaluated by a team of heartless judges + Every Fri (11pm) + Tickets available by phone (424-5564) + (adult)/\$10-\$12 (student/senior) + Tickets available at TX on the Square, door

WINGFIELD ON ICE The Citadel, Shochor Theatre, 9828-101A Ave (425-1820) + Rod Beattie stars in his latest installment of *Playwright Dan Needles'* happy popular series of multi-character one-man shows, in which bank-turned-actor Wingfield and his wife Maggie find their preparations for the birth of their first child complicated when an ice storm not only isolates their farmhouse but also knocks out their heat and light + Until Apr. 4 + Tickets available at Citadel Theatre box office

EVENTS WEEK

For your free listings to 426-2889 or e-mail them to Listings@vive.ab.ca. Deadline is Friday at 3pm

CLUBS/LECTURES

AGEISM: TAKING THE CLOW OF THE GOLDEN YEARS Nina's Restaurant, 10319-124 St (492-0448) + U of A Philosophers' Circle: Presented by Dr. Sherie Kwong See (guest scholar), Dr. Martin Tweeddale (moderator) + Sat, Mar 20 (2-3:30pm) + Free

BUDDHIST MEDITATION Garneau United Place, 11148-85 Ave (412-1006) www.meditationalberta.org + Every Thu (7-9pm): Meditation group

THE CANADIAN AUTHORS ASSOCIATION (463-3679) + Lecture by Bruce Hunter + Mar. 26-27

DECONSTRUCTING SUFFER International Centre, HUB entrance 9101, U of A + Video and discussion regarding how GMOs are entering our food chain and what we can do to avoid this contamination. Presented by BioFeed + Thu, Mar. 18 (7-9pm)

DIVERSITY, LEADERSHIP AND CROSS-CULTURAL AWARENESS International Centre, HUB Mall, U of A Campus + Presented by Canada World View, incorporating models of experiential education, including active audience participation, critical reflection, discussion + Sat, Mar. 27 (10am-5pm) + Free, pre-register (link provided) e-mail radar@bcm-jcm.org

EDMONTON'S PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT McLeod Elementary School, 14807-59 St (496-6137/496-6096) + Meeting to discuss the proposed amendment to the Zoning Bylaw, Matt Berry, Neighbourhood, Ward 3 + Mon, Mar. 22 (7pm)

EXPRESSI0NISM A-Z Edmonton Art Gallery, 2 Sir Winston Churchill Sq (422-6223) + Art 101 lecture presented by Steven Hams + Tue, Mar. 18 (7pm)

GREEN PARTY CANDIDATE Organic Bobs Café, 83 Ave, 112 St (433-6804/484-5211) + The Alberta Green Party, meet your Green representative + Thu, Mar. 18 (7pm)

GROUND SOURCE HEAT PUMPS Grant MacEwan (Downtown Campus) Rm S-142 (3rd Fl), 105 St Building + Presentation by Brian Park + Tue, Mar. 23 (7pm) www.ecn.ab.ca/seci

HARMONY BRUNCH Sultan Banquet Hall, 9241-34A Ave (438-1966) + Canadian Multicultural Education Foundation present speakers and entertainment + Sun, Mar. 21 (12:30-3pm) + \$10

INTERFAITH PRAYER SERVICE FOR THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION City Hall + Prayer service presented by the Edmonton Interfaith Centre + Fri, Mar. 19 (noon) + Free

IT'S YOUR TURN. HELP STOP RACISM NorQuest College, 10215-108 St, Edmonton Auditorium, Main Foyer + Community featuring student speakers, displays on racism, drumming, and dance, and a round dance finale + Mon, Mar. 22 (1-3:30pm)

JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY Stanley A. Milner Library, Edmonton Room (434-1550) + Daniel Woolf presents *Did Jane Austen Hate History? Gender and Genre from the Restoration to Northanger Abbey* + Sat, Mar. 27 (2pm) + Free

A LIBERAL POSITION ON CLIMATE CHANGE Engineering Teaching and Learning Complex (ETLC) room 2-002 (492-8304) + Presentation with David Anderson + Thu, Mar. 18 (6-15pm)

LIVING NOW Providence Renewal Centre, 3005-119 St (434-2569) + Talk and meditation + Fri, Mar. 26 (7-9pm) + \$15

PEACE MARCH Gazebo (Old Strathcona) walk to Corbett Hall (U of A Campus, rally site) www.wage-peace.org (986-2713) + Rally on the first anniversary of the U.S. led attack on Iraq, music, speakers and protest + Sat, Mar. 20 (10pm)

PYREDEAMS AND CHAMELEONS HCL3, Humanities Centre, U of A (434-9036) + Showing of the documentary film *Pyredeams and Chameleons* featuring speakers Luis Merino and Nadia Drost + Wed, Mar. 24 (7pm) + Free, www.GlobalAware.ca

POLITICAL INTERVENTIONS: OPRAH, WOMEN AND WAR Humanities Centre L-1, U of A Campus + Lecture presented by Daphne Read + Mar. 11 (3:30pm)

THE REAL CORPORATE CHALLENGE Westin Hotel, Devonian Room, 10315-100 Ave (447-9400 ext. 234/1-800-232-7208) + An evening with Ali Lewis + Thu, Mar. 25 (7:30-8pm) + \$10 (adv. tickets only) + Tickets available at Earth's General Store

RESPONDING TO RACISM THROUGH THE ACTIVE WITNESSING APPROACH Centre of Action, 10709-105 St (424-3545 ext.229) + For youths (13-23 years) based on the Anti-Racism Response Training (A.R.T.) program + Mar. 27 (10am-4pm), link provided + Free, pre-register by Mar. 19

RETURN TO FREETOOWN + INTERNATIONAL CENTRE (HUB Mall) University of Alberta (492-6695) Show of the documentary *Return to Freetown*, followed by discussion and information about child soldiers, facilitated by Patto Hartnagle; Thu, Mar. 18 (12:30-1:30pm) + **Humanities Building**, Lecture Theatre 3, U of A (492-6695) Discussion following the video facilitated by Nancy Gibson; Mon, Mar. 22 (7-8:30pm)

SEXY SATURDAY Concordia University College, 7128 Ada Blvd (486-2796) + Showcase of seeds, displays, workshops, information sessions + Sat, Mar. 20 (10am-3pm)

T.A.L.E.S. EDMONTON (433-2932) + Storytelling invitation: every 2nd Fri (8pm) + The oral tradition of storytelling (be a listener or a storyteller)

THE THIBETAN BUDDHIST MEDITATION SOCIETY + **LADEN SARTEN LINC** 11403-101 St (479-0014) + Learn about Tibetan Buddhism and meditation with Kushok Dharmchoe of Narmyalgy Monastery in India + Every Tues (7-9pm), beginners + Every Wed (7-9pm) and Sun (11am-1pm): advanced

THE TRUTH ABOUT TOBACCO ON CAMPUS Coast Plaza Hotel + A conference for Alberta post-secondary students presented by The Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission (AADAC) + Mar. 24 + Free, www.aadac.com

UPWARD BOUND TOASTMASTERS Baker Centre, 10th Fl, 10025-106 St (477-2613) + Every Wed (7pm): Weekly meeting about public speaking, and how to improve your communication and leadership skills

WASKANEKAN TRIBAL ASSOCIATION Havreback Park, Shelter 1 (434-6764) + Free guided hikes, approx. 10km at Havreback Park + Sun, Mar. 21 (10am)

QUEER LISTINGS

AXIOS (454-8449) + A support group, local chapter of the international organization of Eastern Orthodox and Eastern Rite Catholic Gay and Lesbian Christians

BOOTS AND SADDLES 10242-106 St (423-5014) + Large tavern with pool tables, restaurant, shows. Members only

BUDDY'S HITS CLUB 117258 Jasper Ave (488-6636) + Open 9-3 + Dancing, strip contests, go-go boys + Every Mon, Free pool. DJs Aron Char, Jeffly Poo, Code Red + No membership needed

DIGNITY EDMONTON (482-6845) + Support community for lesbian/gay Catholics and friends

DOWN UNDER 12224 Jasper Ave (482-7960) + Steam bath

EDMONTON RAINBOW BUSINESS ASSOCIATION (422-6207) + An organization for gay men and lesbians in business and their non-gay friends to share business knowledge, learn, make friends and network in a positive, proud space where being yourself is the norm

GAY MEN'S OUTREACH CIRCLE (GMOC) 45, 9912-106 St (482-0563) + Peer education initiative for gay/bisexual men that works toward preventing the spread of HIV by improving self-esteem

HIV NETWORK OF EDMONTON SOCIETY 105, 10550-102 St (488-5742) + Programs and support services for people affected and infected by HIV/AIDS and related illness. Counseling, referrals, support groups, harm reduction, education, advocacy and public awareness campaigns

ICARE 7024, 10242-105 St (448-1768) + www.icarealberta.org + The Interfaith Centre for AIDS/HIV Resources and Education (formerly Interfaith Association on AIDS) provides spiritual support and connections for those affected by HIV/AIDS

ILLUSIONS SOCIAL CLUB GLCCS, Suite 45, 9912-106 St + Meetings every second Thursday each month

INSIDE/OUT U of A Campus + Monthly meetings for campus-based organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) faculty, graduate student, academic, straight allies and support staff of the U of A to network and advocate in a supportive environment (all and welcome terms)

IT'S YOUR TURN. HELP STOP RACISM NorQuest College, 10215-108 St, Edmonton Auditorium, Main Foyer + Community featuring student speakers, displays on racism, drumming, and dance, and a round dance finale + Mon, Mar. 22 (1-3:30pm)

JANE AUSTEN SOCIETY Stanley A. Milner Library, Edmonton Room (434-1550) + Daniel Woolf presents *Did Jane Austen Hate History? Gender and Genre from the Restoration to Northanger Abbey* + Sat, Mar. 27 (2pm) + Free

LAMBDA CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY CHURCH (Garneau United Church, 11148-84 Ave (474-0753) + Every Sun (7pm): Worship services. Serving the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered community

LIVING POSITIVE www.connect.ab.ca/lwpos (488-5768) + Edmonton Persons Living with HIV: Daily drop-in support group, peer counselling + Society: Peer-facilitated support group, peer counselling + Sat, Mar. 22 (1-3:30pm)

LUTHERANS CONCERNED www.lcna.org (426-0905) + A spiritual community which gathers monthly for sharing, friendship, individual support and a safe space for our own spiritual questions

MAKING NASTY EVENING CLORE www.geocities.com/travellingwaves.cdm + Recreational and competitive evening with Latin dancing, beginners encouraged to participate. Socializing after practices + Practices every Mon and Thu

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH OF EDMONTON (429-2321) + Weekly non-denominational church services

PLAIG GLCCS, Suite 45, 9912-106 St (462-5958) + Meetings every third Tuesday of the month at 7:30pm + Support/education for parents, families and friends of lesbians/gays/bisexual/transgendered

POLICE LIAISON COMMITTEE (421-2277/1-877-882-2011, ext. 2038) + Edmonton Police Service and the gay and lesbian community

PRIME TIMERS (426-7019) + Meetings every second Sunday of the month at 3pm. A social group for gay/bisexual men over 40 and their friends

THE ROOST 10345-104 St (426-3150) + Open Sun-Thurs 8pm-3am, Fri-Sat 8pm-4am + TUE: Hot Butt Contest (8pm-midnight) with DJ Jarry + WED: Amateur strip with Meena Lux, Sticky Vicky, DJ Alvans + THU: Rotating shows. Ladies' review, Sticky's open stage and the Weekend Link game second and last Thursday with DJ Jarry + FR: **Upstairs**: Euro Blitz: New European music with DJ Outzwalk, DJ Jarry and male stripper **Downstairs**: female stripper + Sat: Every Sat like new years **Upstairs**: Monthly theme parties with DJ Jarry, new music with DJ Dan and **Upstairs**: Ladies' review, Sticky's open stage and the Weekend Link game second and last Thursday with DJ Jarry + Tue-Thurs \$1 (member)/\$4 (non-member), Fri-Sat \$4 (member)/\$6 (non-member), Sun \$2

SECRETS BAR AND GRILL 10249-107 St (990-1818) + Lesbian and gay bar/restaurant

TRANSEXUAL/TRANSGENDER SUPPORT GROUP egtr@hotmail.com + Meetings every fourth Tuesday of the month + Information and mutual support for transgendered people in an open, friendly and safe environment. Open to transsexuals, transvestites, cross-dressers, drag queens/kings

WOODYS 11723 Jasper Ave (488-6557) + Open Sun-Thurs 1-12, Fri-Sat 1-3 + Gay nightclub. Every Sun-Tue (7-12am): karaoke with Tizzzy. Every Wed: game show. Every Fri: free

pool. Every weekend, open stage, dance with DJ Arrow

YOUTH + No membership needed

YOUTH UNDERSTANDING YOUTH Gay and Lesbian Community Centre of Edmonton (GLCCS), 45, 9912-106 St (488-1234) + www.youthutmpod.com + Every Sat (7-9pm) + A facilitated social/support group for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, straight and questioning youth under the age of 25

SPECIAL EVENTS

BODY, SOUL AND SPIRIT EXPO Shaw Convention Centre, 9797 Jasper Ave (1-877-566-6830) + Exhibitors and speakers on alternative therapies, healing arts, yoga, astrology and more + Mar. 26-28 (Fri 3-10pm, Sat 10am-10pm, Sun 11am-7pm)

COMMUNITIES AGAINST RACISM: COLLABORATIVE ENCOUNTER Cromdale School, 11240-79 St (474-8445) + This initiative seeks to foster and sustain awareness and deeper understanding of racism through critical reflection, sharing, and looking at challenges. Target participants are churches and volunteers of GLAA programs and the general public. The Youth Anti-racism Project of NAARR will use popular theatre as part of the workshop. Small group activity will present and prioritize courses of action + Saturday, March 20 (11am-3pm)

ECHOES OF LEGENDS: SHADOWS OF STARS Horizon Stage, 1001 Calahoo Rd, Spruce Grove (462-8995/451-8000) + A century music celebration, dedicated to the legendary stars of the Country Music Hall of Fame + Sat, Mar. 27 (7:30pm) + \$25 (adult/\$10 (student/senior)) + Tickets available at the door, by phone at 962-9597, Horizon Stage box office, TicketMaster

EVERY DAY: PROMOTING ACTION AGAINST RACISM AND INTOLERANCE Grant MacEwan College, 10700-104 Ave (497-5819) + Until Mar. 19 + Educational displays, video screenings (Stan Deep and Allen with follow up discussions), and conversations throughout the week; Mar. 21 + Public commemoration with keynote lecture; Sat, 19 (noon-1pm)

FUNDRAISER FOR DREAMSPEAKERS FILM FESTIVAL Blues on Whistle (Commercial) + Fundraiser featuring *Darkside*, with the CBC *Acoustic Roadshow* and "clay" + Mar. 25 + \$7 (door)

KARAOKE FOR EPILEPSY AWARENESS NIGHT + 454-5313 + **Fet Boys** (404-104 St 437-3663) + **Sidelineers** Pub (11018-127 St, 455-6006) + **Silver Martini** (10666, 156 St 484-9753) + **Rosie's** (10315-124 St, 482-1601) + **Rosario's Pub and Karaoke** Centennial (17175-108 Ave, 474-7272) + **Route 66** (3013-66 St, 448-0868) + **Billy Bob's** (Continental



free will astrology

By ROB BREZSNY



ARIES

Mar 21 - Apr 18

For too long, grace has eluded you; you've had to fight your way through life. But now your luck is about to turn and your soul will get the refreshment it needs. To celebrate, imagine you're the one speaking in this poem by Theodore Roethke: "Near the rose, in this grove of sun-parched, wind-warped madrones/Among the half-dead trees, I came upon the true ease of myself,/As if another person appeared out of the depths of my being,/And I stood outside myself,/Beyond becoming and perishing./A something wholly other,/As if I swayed out on the wildest wave alive,/And yet was still,/And I rejoiced in being what I was."



TAURUS

Apr 20 - May 20

In the first *Matrix* movie, the central character, Thomas "Neo" Anderson, gradually begins to suspect that his entire understanding of reality is a delusion. At a key moment, a mysterious ally named Morpheus offers him a choice between two pills. If Neo takes the red pill, Morpheus tells him, he will be able to see the truth he has been blind to. If he swallows the blue pill, he will sink comfortably back into the lie he has been living. I see the coming weeks as a comparable turning point for you, Taurus.

Which will it be: the red pill or the blue pill?



GEMINI

May 21 - June 20

I'll tell you a little cosmic secret, Gemini. One of the best ways to stay on top—which is where you are now, right?—is to keep paying homage to the bottom. So as you harvest your good fortune in the coming weeks, I suggest you express your gratitude for the painful experiences that have taught you how to thrive. While basking in the glow of people's praise and attention, recall the parts of you that are still unripe. When you come home after a day of radiant success, take out the garbage.



CANCER

June 21 - July 22

Last century, Walt Disney coined a word for the inventive engineers who designed the rides and attractions for Disneyland: *imagineers*. In anticipation of the creativity I expect will flow through you this week, Cancerian, I'm going to describe you, too, as an imagineer. It's not that I expect you to literally invent a radical new variation on a roller coaster or anything. But there's a good chance you'll come up with brilliant innovations in the way you have fun.



LEO

July 23 - Aug 22

What's the best way to get yourself in sync with the plans that the Goddess has for you? Follow poet Robert Bly's admonition to "poke holes in your habits." Here are a few suggestions to get you started. Strike up a conversation with a person you'd normally ignore. Write with your non-dominant hand. Try a food you've never tasted. Sprinkle seldom-used words like "sublime," "curiosity" and "reverence" into your conversation. Walk backwards now and then. Slap a crafty grin on your



VIRGO

Aug 23 - Sept 22

Don't sit there passively, Virgo, hoping that fate will be nice to you. Be aggressive about cultivating good fortune. Drum up and track down the lucky breaks you need. To get you in the mood, I've infused the rest of this horoscope with subliminal suggestions that are scientifically formulated to make you a magnet for favours and synchronicities. (Combustion lustre verve blaze.) They will set in motion shifts in your inner chemistry that will help other people see how beautiful you are. (Luminous flourish lucid mojo.) Soon you'll be tuning in to evidence that life is actually conspiring for you to succeed. (Lightning splendor wake-up fuel.)



LIBRA

Sept 23 - Oct 22

I'm always on the lookout for *real* heroes. Not the celebrities, athletes and other fake heroes endlessly hyped by the mainstream media, but brave innovators who show courageous flair in standing up for what's right. The good news is that I recently located an actual hero, and he's a Libra. It's Gavin Newsom, mayor of San Francisco, a Rosa Parks-like figure in the crusade to extend a full array of civil liberties to gays. In his calm fight for fairness, in his skillful use of logic to deal with emotionally charged issues, and in his artful approach to breaking an absurd taboo against joy and passion, he has embodied the highest expression of your sign's potentials. I recommend that you imitate his approach in your own sphere during the coming weeks.



SCORPIO

Oct 23 - Nov 21

In his book *America As Empire: Global Leader or Rogue Power?* Jim Garrison says

America has changed from being a republic to an imperial empire. If you're liberal, you hate this development, and if you're conservative, you like it; but in any case, the deed is done. The genie won't go back into the bottle. The question now is how will America wield its global power? Will it be a bully using brute force to serve its narrow economic aims? Or will it be a gracious sovereign, leading a movement to bring democracy and freedom to every corner of the globe? In my view, Scorpio, you're facing a small-scale version of this dilemma. How will you handle the weighty responsibilities that accompany your increasing clout? Will you mostly indulge your selfish interests, or will you work for the good of all?



SAGITTARIUS

Nov 22 - Dec 21

It took six years for Mark Salzman to write his novel, *Lying Awake*. When it was done, he told the *New Yorker* about the tortures he'd put himself through as he fought against writer's block. During one stretch, he shut out distracting sounds by wrapping a towel around his head. To discourage his cats from crawling on his lap as he wrote, he covered his lower body with aluminum foil. But nothing worked until he fled to a quiet cabin in the woods. "It was like waking from a bad dream," he said, "the removal of all the reminders of a profession, as a way of making money or gaining a reputation. The book wrote itself in five weeks." I suspect that after enduring a period akin to Salzman's arduous warm-up, Sagittarius, you're about to have a cathartic five-week breakthrough of your own.



CAPRICORN

Dec 22 - Jan 18

Your imminent future reminds me of the archaeologists in Scotland who celebrated when they thought they found the

remains of a ninth-century Viking village. Upon further review, however, they realized it was actually the site of a suburban patio from the 1940s. Like them, Capricorn, you will probably be disappointed in your initial forays into the mysterious depths; what you unearth will rouse hopes that are quickly dashed. Unlike the archaeologists, though, you will eventually locate treasure lying beneath the discredited discovery—if you keep digging, that is.



AQUARIUS

Jan 20 - Feb 18

"Be born into the right family. Choose your chromosomes wisely." So begins a list in which Aquarian heiress Paris Hilton details her secrets of success. "Develop a way of entering a room that looks almost royal—but NOT snobby," she continues. "Never have only one cellphone when you can have many. Eat only the worst junk food or the most fabulous food there is, but nothing in-between. Only sleep in Egyptian cotton sheets with a 400 to 600 thread count." I offer you these definitions, Aquarius, in the hope that they'll inspire you to compose your own list. It's an ideal time for you to get very specific about how you plan to achieve happiness and fulfillment.



PISCES

Feb 19 - Mar 20

It's check-in time, Pisces. What progress have you been making in your work on this year's major assignment? As I suggested last December, 2004 will be prime time for learning much, much more about the art of intimacy. So have you been shedding bad habits and unripe attitudes that in the past interfered with your ability to get the closeness you want? Have you sought teaching from experts who are wise about relationships? Have you vowed to seek unions only with emotionally intelligent people who take responsibility for their own darkness? ☺

CLASSIFIEDS

If you want to place your Classified ad in Yue Weekly please phone Carol at 426-1996. Deadline is noon the Tuesday before publication.

accordians

Student size: Hohner, 120 bass, black, \$500; adult size: Titano, parade, black, \$1500. Both in original cases. 455-4635 for info

architecture/decor

Antique Oak Drafting Table, Unique artifact designed to fold for railway transport, \$1500.00 455-7816 for details.

Pair solid wood doors with amber inserts 80"x60", \$225; also small amber windows, \$25 ea. Ph 455-7816 for info

antiques/collectibles

CASH FOR COINS, STAMPS, POSTCARDS Kensington Stamps & Coins, 12526-132 Ave 451-4577

auditions

NO SERVING! Celebrations Dinner Theatre is proud to announce an exciting new opportunity for actors/singers! Artistic Director, Kamilla Reid has taken bold new steps from the traditional Celebrations format and is now thrilled to offer actors/singers the ability to keep their talent and focus entirely on stage or interacting with the audience! No more serving! Plus your talent still enjoys the benefits of above Equity rates and a five-show work week! Kamilla will be holding auditions in March for an exciting new 2004/05 season. Please phone 448-9339 to book your appointment!!

business for sale

TANNING SALON FOR SALE Great location, unique features, call for info 962-7381

Place your Classified ad in Yue Weekly. Phone 426-1996 for more info.

business opportunities

COULD YOU USE AN EXTRA \$300-\$3000/WEEK? Part-time/full-time, work from home. 662-4503. www.itglobalbiz.com

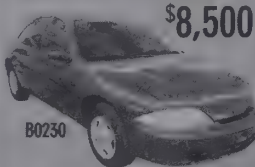
Got GOIL! Drink and grow rich. Call 619-6393.

Breath-taking! Entrepreneurs required to market the latest in hi-tech air purification. \$90-100K 1st Yr. Will train! 1-800-281-3947 www.maximumpower.com/falconquest

cars for sale

2002 Chev. Cavalier Auto, ABS, Traction Cass, Great Fuel Economy

\$8,500



Call Edmonton Motors 482-5771

2003 Olds. Alero 1.4L V6, 180HP, Loaded!, 23,980Kms

\$14,995



Call Edmonton Motors 482-5771

cars for sale

2001 Volkswagen Golf TDI, auto, black, 4 dr, loaded, exc. cond., 110 kms, \$20,500 obo. 384-3169

dance instructors

Medicine Hat College invites applications for the position of Dance Instructor in the college's Conservatory of Music and Dance. This dance instructor position is a full-time, ten-month term position commencing Sept. 1, 2004, annually renewable each September in subsequent years. Ideally, candidates will have a versatile dance background, with relevant certification and/or a diploma or degree in the field; however, all combinations of education and experience will be considered. Individuals with an expertise and interest in teaching children's beginners, ballet, jazz and tap as well as all levels of hip-hop and other forms of recreational dance are strongly encouraged to apply.

Remuneration for this position takes the form of a competitive hourly wage and benefits package. Annual renewal of the position is subject to performance reviews and student enrolments.

Please submit your resume, a cover letter and the names of three references quoting **Competition #340064** to: Human Resources, Medicine Hat College, 299 College Drive SE, Medicine Hat, AB, T1B 3Y6. E-Mail: kzimmerman@mhc.ab.ca Deadline for receipt of applications is March 30, 2004.

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Celebrations Dinner Theatre is now seeking a musician/producer to create professional tracks to accompany singers. This individual must be comfortable with pop and rock. Musical theatre would be a major asset. Must also be able to produce from 10 to 18 tracks in a timely manner under strict deadlines. Please contact Kami at 619-6193 with a demo. Only accept mini disc and/or CD formats.

The Global Visions Festival Society is currently seeking a Festival Producer.

The Global Visions Film Festival (GVFF) takes place annually in heart of downtown Edmonton and presents a program of documentaries and diverse cultural experiences.

- Responsibilities include: marketing, fundraising, programming, logistics and production as well as strengthening the support from new and existing partners and the community to ensure the continued growth of the festival.
- Key Qualifications: Arts or festival administration, event & sponsorship fundraising, marketing & promotion.

For full details on the position, please visit www.globalvisionsfestival.com

Forward your resume and cover letter to gvffjob@telus.net or mail to Global Visions Festival Society, 9722-102st, Edmonton, AB T5K 0X4

This competition closes on March 17th, 2004 and has an April 1st, 2004 start date.

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Nextfest is looking for emerging visual artists to take part in this year's festival. Check www.nextfest.org or nextfest@artists.ph for info or call 453-2440. Don't miss your chance to be a part of Edmonton's most dynamic arts festival. Submission deadline is April 1, 2004.

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts (AFA) slide submission. Artists (reside in Alberta and not represented in the AFA collection). Deadline: Apr. 1. Info PH 427-9968. www.cd.gov.ab.ca

Calling all Edmontonians for photographs of Edmonton! Edmonton Art Gallery's 108 Years / 100 Pictures exhibition. Deadline: Apr. 16. Info: 422-6223.

Call for submissions: 1-year Artist in Residence at Harcourt House Arts Centre. Deadline May 31. Info: 426-4180, harcourt@telusplanet.net

Literary Contest (In Spanish)
The Chilean-Canadian Community of Edmonton, fifth literary contest. Open to anybody who writes in Spanish and resides in Canada. Deadline: May 25. Info: Ph 469-3409.

Call for Submissions: The Alberta Council of Women's Shelters is planning to publish a collection of writing from Alberta women. Ph 456-7000. Deadline: Mar. 30.

Win two photography workshops and a chance at \$1000. The Works Art & Design Festival is taking appl. for "Snapshots High School Photography Competition" www.theworks.ab.ca (click on "what's new" e-mail: theworks@telusplanet.net) Ph 426-2122.

Photographer looking for interesting people with

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Drop-in SCREENWRITERS circle. First Tue of ea. month at 7pm. Call 429-1671 or visit FAVA.ca

Calling all artists! The Edmonton Art Gallery/Walter Phillips Gallery calling for Submissions for the 2005 Alberta Biennial of Contemporary Art. Info: Ph 422-6223.

ANNUAL SPIRITUAL POETRY CONTEST Theme: Writing toward The Light. Adult/Youth. Deadline: Apr. 26. Ph (403) 210-2802 <http://www.spiritualdirections.com>

10th Annual Seven Hills Literary Contest: unpublished works; Children's Literature-deadline June 30. Young Adults (Items) fiction: judged in adult categories; Memoirs-deadline July 31; Short Story-deadline August 31. Info: Tallahassee Writers Association www.twaonline.org

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"One Voice" seeks female singers for a Monday evening choir and concert for Alberta's 100th. 420-6707 tim@musicale.ca

Pro Coro Canada is holding auditions for professional-level singers for its 2004-2005 Concert Season on April 16-18.

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Golden Gate Gospel, coffee house. Every Sat. 7pm. Golden Harvest Church of Pentecost, 10504-128 St. Corner of Stony Plain Rd. 447-4357.

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The Works Art & Design Festival looking for Musicians/bands interested in gigs. The Works Street Stage for this year's festival, June 25-July 2. Ph 426-2122 ext 226.

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9th Annual Community Volunteer Income Tax Program in March for low income individuals. Free at the U of A

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volunteers

Chance for Children needs volunteers to take on short and longer term projects around our office. Please call 448-1505 for info.

FOOD NOT BOMBS NEED VOLUNTEERS TO HELP FEED THE HUNGRY. Help out any Saturday, 10am, Boyle Street Co-op, 10116-105 Ave. Food serving 1pm.

Harcourt House Arts Centre seek volunteers for committee work, openings, band members, gallery sitting, exhibition installation, mail-outs. Ph 426-4180, e-mail: harcourt@telusplanet.net

Alberta Easter Seals needs volunteers to deliver posters, brochures, help at events. Call nec. Ph Carmen 429-0137 x233

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IT'S ALL GOTTA GO! GO! GO! CUZ WE BE PO! PO! PO!



alt sex column

By ANDREA NEMERSON

Sleepy LaBeef

Dear Readers:

The question of whether or not it's okay to bugger one's wife in her sleep did, predictably, attract some reader response. And while it's sort of fun to be accused of aiding and abetting rapists, I'd rather have irrefutable proof that people ought to listen to me if they know what's good for them, and I got some of that too. Read on.

Love, Andrea

Dear Andrea:

Your response to "Night Rider" includes this: "An 'oopsie!' moment is one thing, Mr. Rider; consistent nonconsensual night-pokery is quite another."

Nonconsensual night-pokery is rape. Anyone even contemplating this needs to know that this is a criminal offense, not some prat about how his wife probably wouldn't like it.

Love, There's Only One Way to Look at These Things: Mine

Dear Mine:

You may be gratified to hear that upon receiving your letter I sat down, reread the column in question, and gave some serious thought to whether I had done my correspondent, his wife and all humankind a grave disservice by concentrating on the interpersonal rather than the legal ramifications of night-pokery. My conclusion (and that of my editors as well): "Worth considering, but, nah."

The principle of "sex positivity" rests upon the belief that all sex is created equal except nonconsensual sex, which is bad. Simplistic as this construct may be, I generally go along with it. I usually add "stupid sex" (sex that will kill you, sex with your sister, sex with your sister-in-law, most cheating, most bestiality, sex with anyone you would be horrified to discover in bed with your come morning...) to the not-okay list myself, but I am admittedly meaner and more judgmental than many of my peers.

The question here, though, is not whether sleep-buggery is stupid (it's pretty stupid) or nonconsensual (it is surely that, and I said so in the column), but whether all nonconsensual sex is rape. I've given a good deal of thought to this question—I've had to, having put in my time not only in the

sex ed trenches but (way back) as a feminist activist, which means I've had plenty of experience working with, well, you. The answer is "No." Not all nonconsensual sex is rape, any more than all unpleasant behaviour is abuse.

Sometimes an outsider can look at an event and make the call herself. ("No, changing your mind after the fact does not make your sex partner a rapist.") Sometimes it's more complicated and we have to leave it up to the complainant to decide if she (or, yes, he) was sexually assaulted or just had a yucky experience. Most people have had unpleasant sex they didn't want to have; most people have not been raped. If you want to quibble about that, you'll have to quibble with somebody else.

In this case, while we don't have the victim's testimony, we do have the offender's report, below. It doesn't sound to me like the Poker's wife thinks her husband is a rapist. It sounds like she thinks he's an asshole.

Love, Andrea

Dear Andrea:

I'm the supposed "liar" from the "Night Crotchman" column some weeks ago. I just wanted to tell you how it all ended up a month before I saw your answer on the Net. You were right—I told her about it and we had a big fight. We haven't made love since then. Her reaction was just like yours: "consistent nonconsensual night-pokery" shows no respect for your partner. I did it because I somehow was sure of a different outcome. I thought of it as "game" not as an abuse.

In any case, it really happened. The "porny details" were meant to be just a description (even if a bad one) of things.

Love, Sorry Rider

Dear Rider:

I hope your wife forgives you, although I wouldn't be surprised if it took a while.

Love, Andrea

Eeling her up

Dear Andrea:

In regards to the column about dead fish and other terrible terrible dildo substitutes, there is a rather atrocious bestiality video that has been shown in a sexual variations class at San Francisco State University that involves the use of an eel as a dildo that is later served for dinner.

Love, Helpful Reader

Dear Reader:

I have only two things to say about the eel video, and then we will never mention it again, deal?

- (1) I've seen it too.
- (2) The eel was alive.

Love, Andrea @

Andrea Nemerson writes and teaches in San Francisco. You can e-mail her a question at andrea@altsexcolumn.com.

volunteers

Volunteer with your dog! Dogs should be at least 1yr old and obedience trained. The Chimo Project needs volunteers for animal-assisted therapy. 452-2451.

Do you drive? Do you like to help others? Ph 732-1221 for more info on our volunteer driving program. Gas monies re-imbursed.

E.C.A.W.A.R. (EDMONTON COALITION AGAINST WAR AND RACISM) Volunteers welcome. www.wage-peace.com for info/contacts; Ph 988-2713

New Home Immigration and Settlement Centre, offers programs and services to newcomers and their families tailored to meet their educational and social needs. Ph Barbara Nichols for info on volunteer opportunities 425-7869

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Brain Neurobiology Research Program at UoA seeks individuals suffering from SOCIAL PHOBIA for research study (Call 407-3906). Reimbursement provided.

Brain Neurobiology Research Program at UoA seeks individuals suffering from SEVERE PMS for research study (Ph 407-3775). Reimbursement provided.

Brain Neurobiology Research Program at UoA seeks individuals suffering from PANIC ATTACKS for research study (Call 407-3221). Reimbursement provided.

THE WORKS ART & DESIGN FESTIVAL needs volunteers to help with preparations for this year's festival. Call Sally 426-2122 ext. 223

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The Edmonton John Howard Society Re: Family Violence Prevention Centre is in need of good (used) home furniture. Ph Carolynne for details 423-1635.

Profiles Public Art Gallery, St. Albert reg. volunteers: Exhibition installation Mar. 8-10; Research Assistant; Artistic Trading Cards Session Facilitator. Ph Edward of Terry 460-4310.

The Sexual Assault Centre need volunteer to help with reception and light office duties. Ph Belinda 423-4102.

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The Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton needs volunteers to take calls on the 24-hour crisis line. You can work from your own home. Ph Heather 423-4102. Next training Apr. 27. **Adult Day Support** program needs friendly Volunteering Volunteers for frail seniors, commitment of 4 hours per week, call Gwen @ 434-4747.

Can you spare one morning or afternoon a week? The Learning Centre Literacy Association is looking for people to help adults develop their literacy skills. Volunteer at the Centre and help others make positive changes for themselves and their communities. Ph Phyllis at 429-0675.

ESL Tutors urgently needed! If you have been looking for a volunteer opportunity, this may be the one for you. Call P.A.L.S. at 424-5514 to help someone learn English as a second language. Training and materials are provided.

Make a difference in the lives of women in prison. Become a mentor with Community Justice Ministries, a prisoner support program of Mennonite Central Committee. Ph Suzanne 423-9677.

Volunteer drivers wanted: Why don't you join our team. We supply a gas honorarium to cover cost. Flexible volunteer hours Mon-Fri, 8:30-4:30. Call 732-1221 for info

Chrysalis, a non-profit organization dedicated to providing services to citizens who have disabilities, is looking for volunteers. Please contact 454-9656 for more information.

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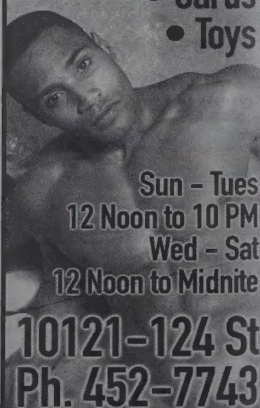
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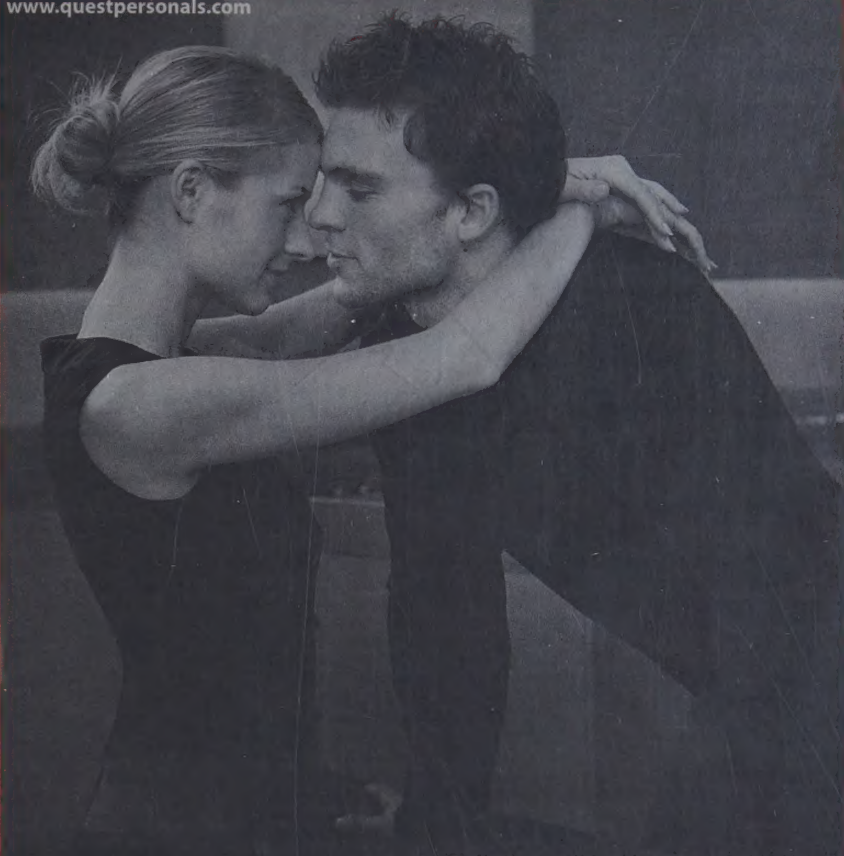
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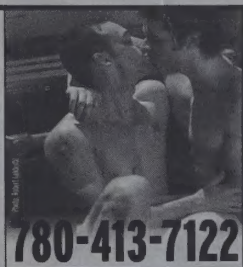


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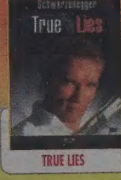
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□ DESTINY'S CHILD
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□ Amanda Marshall

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